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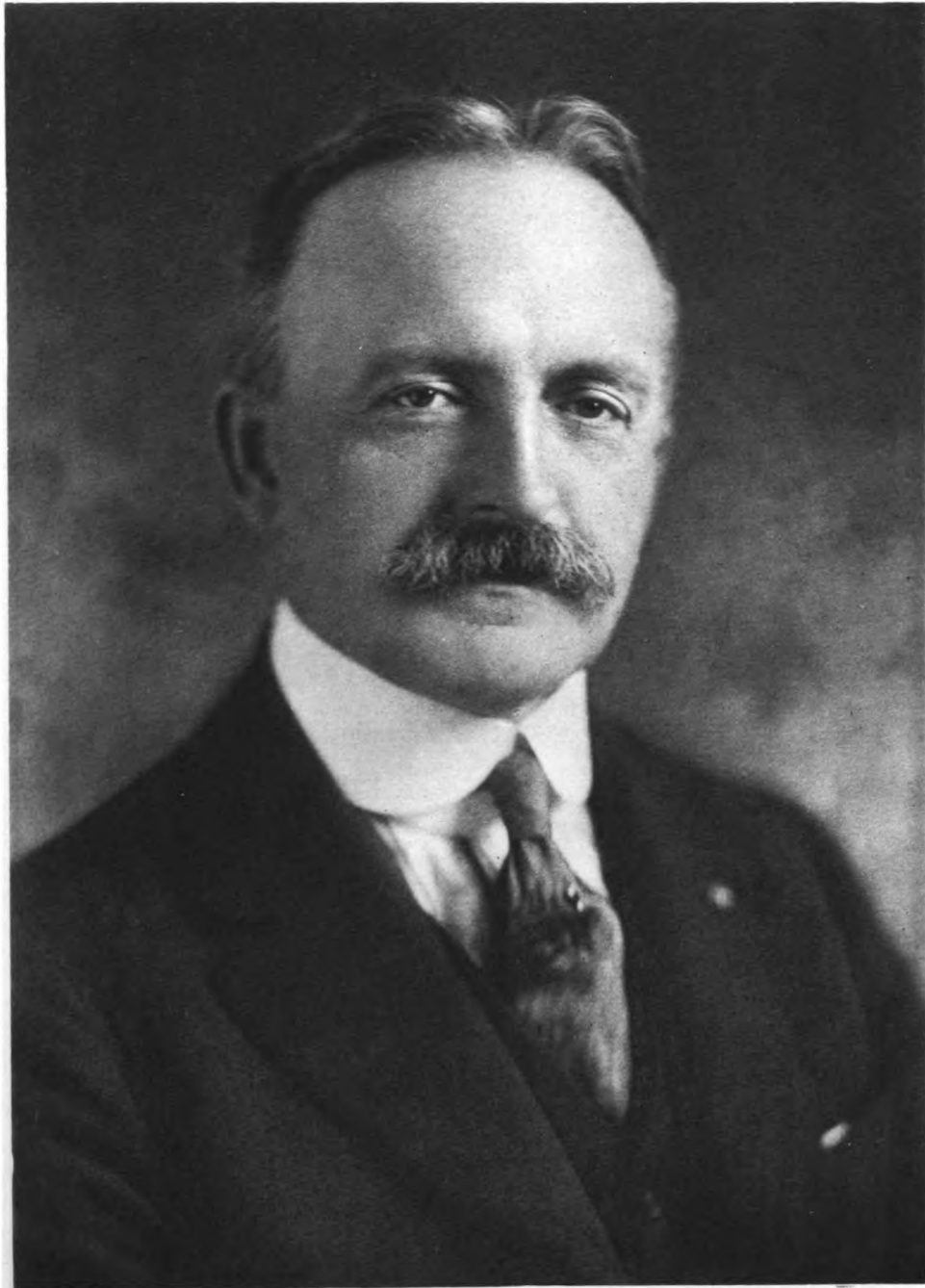


*DR. ALBERT GALLATIN MACKEY*









*Prof. S. L. L. 33°*







*OPERATIVE MAISONS OF THE 10TH CENTURY*















NEW — REVISED — ENLARGED

# Mackey's History of Freemasonry

BY

ROBERT INGHAM CLEGG, 33°

WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MANY  
EMINENT AUTHORITIES  
INCLUDING

WILLIAM JAMES HUGHAN  
PAST SENIOR GRAND DEACON, GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND;  
PAST SENIOR GRAND WARDEN, EGYPT;  
PAST SENIOR GRAND WARDEN, IOWA, ETC.

*And ye shall know the truth, and the  
truth shall make you free.*

The Gospel according to  
SAINT JOHN, VIII: 32

*Without knowledge there can be no sure  
progress.*

CHARLES SUMNER



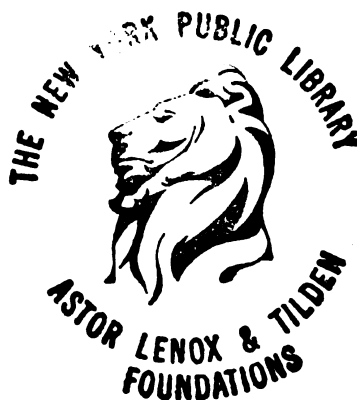
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THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA





DEDICATED WITH  
GRATITUDE TO THE MIGHTY  
BROTHERHOOD OF FREEMASONS WHOSE  
WORLD-WIDE ENTERPRISE FOR ALL THAT PERTAINS  
TO THE CRAFT HAS EVER FAITHFULLY SERVED AND INSPIRED  
THE MASONIC HISTORIAN TO LABOR ZEALOUSLY IN  
THE ARCHIVES OF OUR GREAT INSTI-  
TUTION'S HONORABLE AND  
PROGRESSIVE PAST  
AND PRESENT



## *Important*

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History Company on the  
subject of Freemasonry.**

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Provides Light and Proficiency***







## PREFACE



O comprehensive a title as the one selected for the present work would be a vain assumption if the author's object was not really to embrace in a series of studies the whole cycle of Masonic history and science. Such was the opening sentence written by Brother Albert Gallatin Mackey for the first edition of his truly monumental *History of Freemasonry*. None knew better than he the full force of what he then observed, none were so fully capable of carrying out so great an undertaking, and none would have so readily acknowledged the need for revision when later discoveries should unearth new and weighty facts relating to the old information. Of this conviction we are the more thoroughly assured because Brother Mackey invariably practiced what he preached, writing in a spirit of candor deserving of every praise and imitation, especially by the Masonic historian.

*Progress means the ability to improve*

Brother Mackey always frankly and promptly adopted all new and reliable methods of cautious research and was equally candid over the puzzling situations sometimes brought about by other writers in mixing facts with fiction. Pointing out that the very age of the Masonic institution had tended to confuse mere traditions or legends with the authentic truths of history, he welcomed light from all directions but carefully applied critical standards to the source and standing of the information that came his way. By no means was he ready to reject a Masonic legend as fable. On the contrary, he clearly declares that an object of his in writing the story of Freemasonry was to show that these Masonic legends contained the germs of a historical record, mingled often with a symbolical idea, and that when these statements were stripped of their worthless husks the kernel almost always presents in that simple form a philosophic message.

*Tradition holds the germ of much truth*



To establish this principle in the literature of Freemasonry, to divest the Legends of the Craft of the false values given to them by blind belief, and to protect them from the equally false estimate bestowed upon them by the excessive disbelief of those unphilosophical sceptics who view them but as idle fables without more meaning than what these doubters attach to monkish legends—as Brother Mackey says was the purpose he pursued to place even the legendary history of Freemasonry in the just position which it should occupy but had never possessed.

Casting aside the old theories of Freemasonry, having an origin at the Temple of Solomon, or from the Pagan Mysteries, or in the *Mackey's works are the standard authorities* by blind belief, and to protect them from the equally false estimate bestowed upon them by the excessive disbelief of those unphilosophical sceptics who view them but as idle fables without more meaning than what these doubters attach to monkish legends—as Brother Mackey says was the purpose he pursued to place even the legendary history of Freemasonry in the just position which it should occupy but had never possessed.

*How the Craft spread abroad* Crusades, Brother Mackey sought in the records of the past for a closer and more probable connecting link in the chain of evidence. Finding the Roman Colleges of Artificers to meet his expectations, they having an almost identical organization of builders and architects, he traced with the greatest diligence their growth and progress. Freemasons of the Roman Empire,—they traveled through the Provinces with the victorious legions of the Cæsars, teaching by example and precept the architectural arts to Italians, Spaniards, Gauls, and Britons. The Empire fell by decay but the splendid stone structures survived, an enduring example and a record for imitation and research.

These conclusions of Brother Mackey have been upheld by later investigation though we need not exclude other promising paths of discovery. Freemasonry has so broad an angle of vision that we may the rather assume the Craft indebted to several sources than to any one, however likely that may be in appeal or promise. Proposing as he did to trace a connection of historical continuity extending from the first appearance of any association wherein we may search for the origin of modern Freemasonry, and from thence to the present when the organization has assumed a well-known form, Brother Mackey held that there were two elements marked well in every link of that chain of evidence.

First there must be an operative element. Freemasonry can be traced only to an association of builders or architects. Every ceremony in the Ritual, every Symbol in the philosophy of Speculative Freemasonry positively proves that it has been



derived from and is closely connected with the art of building. The first Freemasons were builders, they could have been nothing else. To seek for them in a mystical religious association as the ancient Pagan Mysteries, or in an institution of Chivalry as in the Knights of the Crusades, was in Brother Mackey's opinion a vain and unprofitable task. As well, says he, might one look for the birthplace of the eagle in the egg of the crow as to attempt to trace the origin of Freemasonry in anything other than an association of builders.

*Freemasonry is based  
on the builders' art*

Then there must be the spirit of the Gild. Those who have come together must not have grouped themselves temporarily for the mere purpose of doing a certain trade task, each man wholly independent of the others, and arbitrarily exercising only his own skill. A permanent organization there must be, a common unity of interests, a division of labor, a spirit of fellowship and fraternity, in short an organization forward-looking for all.

A certain number of Craftsmen brought together to construct an edifice and then after its erection to separate, each on his own footing, from his fellows, to seek further employment under new masters and with new companions, could never, under such circumstances, be concentrated and welded into such organizations as would, in the lapse of time, give rise to the Lodges of modern Speculative Freemasons.

*Gild spirit the  
bond of union*

"Such is the plan of the history that has been pursued in the present work," says Brother Mackey, "a plan which materially and essentially differs from that of any preceding writer. Iconoclasts have composed monographs in which they attacked particular fallacies and denounced special forgeries but the history of Freemasonry as a whole has not before been written with the same spirit of candor that has been or should always be exercised in the composition of history.

"Doubtless the well settled and carefully nourished prejudices of some will be shocked by any attempt to expose the fallacies and falsehoods which have too long tarnished the annals of Freemasonry. Yet such an attempt cannot, if it be successfully pursued, but command the approval of all who believe with Cicero that history is 'the witness of time, the light of truth, and the life of memory.'"

*A guide worthy  
of all esteem*



While Brother Mackey's death cut short the full output he had planned and other hands than his carried forward the labor from where he had left the working tools, yet the program as laid down by him has been to his successors a constant guide. Nothing in the present revision has been written save in the spirit of his intentions and as we fully believe would have met the approval of Brother Mackey.

None would more promptly than he have taken advantage of the later discoveries. For while the convictions he held regarding the sources of Freemasonry are today as convincing as ever, we have now the greater range of facts if for no other reason than there is available a much larger store of them. Owing to the researches of Brother Henry Sadler regarding the early relations, one to the other, of the two Grand Lodges at London in the eighteenth century and which by the union of 1813 so happily settled the old conflict of authority we no longer look upon the situation from the same angle as of old. Much material has also been unearthed by Brother William J. Hughan and his able co-workers of the famous Quatuor Coronati Lodge, especially in tracing the "Old Charges," these precious documentary relics of early Freemasonry. Of the spread of the Craft over the globe and the Degrees associated therewith we all owe much, indeed, to the patient studies of Brother Robert F. Gould. No one interested in the Morgan episode can ignore the investigation of Brother John Ross Robertson, and on other topics we have the information collected by Brothers A. F. A. Woodford, George W. Speth, E. L. Hawkins, Dr. W. J. Chetwode Crawley, Dr. W. Begemann, and others.

All these Brethren have passed on to their eternal reward, all were keenly interested in the present work, and in the revision nearly all of them actively contributed encouraging messages of scholarly cöoperation and by other helpful means. The late Brother Hughan read the earlier editions closely and wrote at considerable length many useful suggestions which have been duly incorporated in the present work. In fact every available source of information has been used.

Masonic libraries everywhere welcomed the search for facts and hearty acknowledgment is here accorded to Brothers Julius



F. Sachse and J. E. Burnett Buckenham of the Grand Lodge Library at Philadelphia; Brothers George Fleming Moore, John H. Cowles, and Wm. L. Boyden of the Scottish Rite Library at Washington; Brothers N. R. Parvin and C. C. Hunt of the Iowa Masonic Library at Cedar Rapids; Brothers Scott Bonham, John L. McLeish, and Frank S. Bonham of the Masonic Library Association at Cincinnati; Grand Secretary Frederick W. Hamilton of the Grand Lodge Library at Boston, and Brother W. J. Songhurst of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, London, England.

No attempt can be made to list all the Brothers whose courteous coöperation has contributed generously to the success of the revision. On first taking up the question with the Grand Secretaries of every Masonic jurisdiction and of every coördinate body in North America and many other countries the matter frequently became the subject there of conference and of correspondence with Grand Lodge Historians and Grand Recorders and Grand Secretaries, National and State, and Committees of various titles, but all most helpful. Every page was submitted for correction to an authority upon the subject. This broadening of the field of inquiry over a half-dozen years of labor resulted in a splendid harvest of contributed facts. Due acknowledgment will be found in the pages of the work for the fine spirit so generally exhibited by those to whom any appeal was made for assistance. From all quarters there was the universal response, based upon the cordial recognition of Dr. Mackey's pioneer researches, and the earnest desire to aid in checking every statement that through error of author or printer might be in any wise at fault. Thus every item has been tested by those best qualified to guarantee accuracy.

Much new material has been introduced. Aside from the numerous additions to be found everywhere in the text covering the topics treated in the former editions by Brothers Albert G. Mackey and W. R. Singleton some entirely new chapters have been added to round out the story of Freemasonry in other countries, and to deal with such related matters as the Order of High Priesthood, the Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, the Mystic Order Veiled Prophets of the Enchanted Realm, and the Order of the Eastern Star.

*Many authorities  
furnished facts*

*Additions made  
to the old book*



Something should be said here to those who undertake the study of Freemasonry. While the effort has earnestly been made to furnish accurately and concisely the facts concerning the Craft in many countries and through the various periods of history, yet this very complete account may be an awkward problem to handle by the reader who is not familiar to some extent with the subject or with historical researches. To begin with the first chapter, and studiously work steadily through the whole series of books, in regular order, will take considerable time if done carefully.

There is but one remedy. Choose your own main object of Masonic inquiry. Locate the several references to it in the index at the end of the work. Look in the index for every word that has any bearing whatever on the subject the reader proposes to examine. He will probably find several promising references. Let him take those up in order, reading the chapters that touch in any way upon them. From this start, the reader will gradually, pleasantly, and logically, enlarge his scope of preferred studies. In due time the whole field of Freemasonry will be open to the student and, building his knowledge upon the facts first sought by him because of their special appeal to his taste, he will the more happily and thoroughly extend his reading.

By this simple course of inquiry the study of the book is made attractive of approach, the unfolding of the knowledge it contains is rendered easy to grasp, and the one chosen topic leads the reader naturally on to a larger variety of studies, all systematically related and affording the greatest satisfaction by this delightful and rational method.

Now we come to the last few words and again our grateful pen would fain record the appreciation felt toward the Freemasons everywhere whose great goodwill has never failed. Editorially the long, laborious task of revision was sweetened and sustained by the ready response from all quarters, the characteristic coöperative spirit of the Masonic Brotherhood, continually in evidence and always of genial service. To Melvin M. Johnson, Past Grand Master of Massachusetts; Frank H. Johnson, Grand Recorder of the Grand Encampment, Knights Templar, of the

*How to study  
Freemasonry*

*Proficiency made  
easy and rapid*

*Thanks due many  
Masonic students*



## PREFACE

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United States; Charles A. Conover, General Grand Secretary of the General Grand Chapter, Royal Arch Masons; Henry W. Mordhurst, General Grand Recorder of the General Grand Council, Royal and Select Masters, especial thanks are due. The help of every Grand Secretary and many other Masonic officials at home and abroad was sought successfully, therefore any attempt to mention all is barred by sheer lack of space. But, among the numerous Fellow Craftsmen in this great undertaking none were more zealous than Brother Walter C. Burrell, President of the Masonic History Company, whose abiding faith and earnest encouragement will ever be fondly remembered.

ROBERT INGHAM CLEGG, 33°.







## INTRODUCTION



WE planned the revision of this book to be thoroughly correct and complete. Nothing has been allowed to interfere with our plans. Not a single statement of the old book escaped attention and every obtainable means of coöperation was invited and employed to the end that in all particulars the finished work should be reliably sound and humanly perfect.

Distance nor any other difficulty prevented our use of assistance in all parts of the world. Letters innumerable freely found the Masonic Brotherhood of students everywhere willing and even eager to do all that could be done far and near to clear up the historical records for us.

For example, the Grand Orient and the Grand Lodges of France officially examined the chapters dealing with Freemasonry in that country and contributed additional information of most valuable character.

Past Grand Master Will H. Whyte personally checked over the history of Freemasonry in Canada, a chapter originally written by him, and pronounced the revised essay to be in every way as excellent as it was concise, a compact and accurate collection of facts.

In this spirit the entire work has been performed and we can place it with confidence in the hands of the Craft knowing they may rely upon it to the utmost.

Not a chapter has been given a place unless we were all convinced that the facts it presented were truthful as well as instructive. But everyone will have his own preference in taking up the reading of these chapters. Tastes differ in literature for the mind as much as they do in food for the body. Therefore, we urge the reader to follow Brother Clegg's suggestion and skip freely on his first examination of the book. Our own choice for a start would be



Chapter 90 for a most interesting grasp of what is known of the earliest introduction of Freemasonry into North America. Then we would read Chapter 80 for a better understanding of the Third Degree. Afterwards we would examine Chapter 45 for a clear and concise survey of Freemasonry in the making. This is but a hint based on our own habits of reading and is not intended as a chart to be followed by everybody.

Other readers after consulting the General Index at the end of the last volume might go differently about getting the information from the book. Each will have his own choice and no matter what his direction, he can but find a storehouse of knowledge, gathered judiciously through long years, the patiently earnest labor of many ably devoted to the edification of the Craft.

We were not content to stop with giving the editorial work of the revised book all the care that could be put into its perfection. The type, the binding, and the paper, have all had the most thorough study. Type was selected to furnish a compact and clear appeal to the eye, suitable at once to the page dimensions and the paper texture, and of the best reading qualities. Especial pains were taken to make the binding of dignified and truly symbolic style, not a solitary line of the artists' work failing to have every supervision to ensure Masonic merit as well as accuracy of the highest quality. The initials for the chapters were also specially designed and cast for the book. In fact nothing is lacking to make the work worthy in every way of the great Institution of Freemasonry.

We are most willing to confer with the readers of this book. We shall be ever disposed to offer our services in any way whereby they may obtain the store of information in the best manner possible. We aim at making well-informed Master Masons and shall cheerfully respond to every call upon us. Ours is an educational organization and we endeavor to keep it functioning effectively. Knowing that this magnificent work is both as correct and complete as human effort may expect it to be, we trust the splendid collection of facts will be put to use and no effort will be lacking on our part to that end.

THE MASONIC HISTORY COMPANY.



























# PREHISTORIC MASONRY

## CHAPTER ONE

### TRADITION AND HISTORY IN MASONRY



IN the study of Freemasonry there are two kinds of statements presented to the mind of the student. These are sometimes in agreement, but much oftener conflicting, in their character.

These are the historical and the traditional, each of which belongs to Freemasonry but each considers it from a different angle.

The historical statement relates to the institution as we look at it from an exoteric or public point of view; the traditional refers only to its esoteric or secret character.

So long as its traditional legends are confined to the ritual of the Order, they are not fit subjects of historical inquiry. They have been invented by the makers of the rituals for symbolic purposes connected with the forms of initiation. Out of these myths of Speculative Masonry its philosophy has developed. As they are really to be considered as merely the expansion of a philosophic or speculative idea, they can not properly be placed in the class of recorded events, historical narratives.

But in the published works of those who have written on the origin and progress of Masonry, the legendary or traditional has been mingled too much with the historical element. The effect of this course has been, on critical minds, to weaken all claims of the institution to an historical existence. The doctrine of "false in one thing, false in all," has been rigidly applied, and those statements of the Masonic historian which are fully reliable have been doubted or rejected, because in other portions of his work he has been too easily deceived.



Borrowing the technical language of science, we may say that the history of Freemasonry may be divided into two periods—the prehistoric and the historic. The former is traditional, the latter is based on documents. Each of these divisions must, in any historical inquiry, be clearly defined. There is also another division, into esoteric and exoteric history.<sup>1</sup> The first is entirely within the tyed area of the Order, and can not be the subject of ordinary historical methods. The second properly comes within the sphere of historical study, and is subject to all the laws of historical criticism.

When we are treating of Freemasonry as one of the social organizations of the world—as one of those institutions resulting from civilization, and which have sprung up in the progress of society; and, finally, when we are considering what are the influences that the varying conditions of that society have produced upon it, and what influences it has in turn produced upon these changing conditions—we are then engaged in the solution of a historical problem, and we must pursue the inquiry by historical method and not otherwise. We must discard all speculation, because history deals only with facts.

If we were treating the history of a nation, we should assert nothing of it as historical that could not be traced to and be tested by written records. All that is guessed of the events that may have occurred in the earlier period of such a nation, of which there is no record dating from or near that time, is properly thrown into the dim era of the prehistoric age. It forms no part of the genuine history of that nation, and can be dignified, at its highest value, with the title of historical speculation only, claiming no other confidence than that which its seeming truth or its likelihood commands.

Now, the possibility or the probability that a certain event may have occurred in the early days of a nation's existence, but of which event there is no record, will be great or little, as dependent on certain other events which bear upon it, and which come within the era of its records. The event may have been possible, but not probable, and then but very little or no importance would be attached to it, and it would at once be put in

<sup>1</sup> "Esoteric" and "exoteric" are words commonly used among Freemasons. "Esoteric" means secret to all but the initiated, and "exoteric" refers to the public and the published.



the class of myths. Or it may have been both possible and highly probable, and we may be then permitted to speculate upon it as something that had exerted an influence upon the early character or the later progress of the nation. But, even then, it would not cease to be a myth. Whatever we might assert of it would only be a guess. It would not be history, for that deals not in what may have been, but only of that which actually has been.

The progress in these latter days of what are called the exact sciences has led, by the force of example and comparison, to a more critical examination of the facts, or, rather, the so-called facts, of history.

Voltaire said, in his *Life of Charles XII. of Sweden*, that "incredulity is the foundation of history." Years passed before that rule in all its force was accepted by the learned. But at length it has been adopted as the guide of all historical criticism. To be easily deceived is to be unphilosophical, and scholars accept nothing as history that can not be proved with almost mathematical certainty.

Niebuhr, the historian, began by shattering all faith in the story of Rhea Sylvia, of Romulus and Remus and of their wolf mother. These curious stories, with many other incidents of the early Roman annals, were classed by him as myths.

In later times, the patriotic heart of Switzerland has been made to mourn by the discovery that the story of William Tell, and of the apple which he shot from the head of his son, is nothing but fiction, a fable of the Middle Ages and found in a great many countries, and the circumstances of which, everywhere varying in details, still point to a common origin in some early symbolic myth.

It is thus that many narratives, once accepted as truthful, have been, by careful study, removed from the domain of history; and such works as Goldsmith's *Histories of Greece and Rome* are no longer deemed fitting textbooks for schools, where nothing but truth should be taught.

The same rules of examination which are pursued in the separation of what is true from what is false in the history of a nation should be applied in finding the character of all statements in Masonic history. However, this course has unhappily



not been generally pursued. Many of its legends are really founded, as we shall endeavor to show, on a historical basis. Quite as many, if not more, are made up out of a mixture of truth and fiction, the boundaries of each being difficult to define. A still greater number are myths with no appreciable element of truth in their composition. Yet, for nearly two centuries, all of these three classes of Masonic legendary information have been accepted by the great body of the Fraternity, as equally faithful accounts of undoubted truthfulness.

It is by liberally accepting the false for the true, fables as authentic narratives, that imaginative writers have been encouraged to plunge into the realms of absurdity instead of confining themselves to the field of legitimate history, that has cast an air of romance over much that has hitherto been written about Freemasonry. Unjustly, but very naturally, scholars have been inclined to reject all our legends in every part as beyond belief, because they found in some the elements of fiction.

But, on the other hand, contradictions of legend-makers, and the ready belief of legend-readers, have, by a healthy reaction, given rise to a school of critics which sprang up from a praiseworthy desire to shape the principles governing all investigations into Masonic history to the rules which control profane writers in the examination of the history of nations.

As examples of the legends of Masonry that have tempted the belief of many and excited the doubts of others, those almost universally accepted legends may be cited which trace the organization of Freemasonry in its present form to the time of King Solomon's temple—the story of Prince Edwin and the Grand Lodge congregated by him at the city of York in the 10th century—and the theory that the three symbolic degrees were instituted as Masonic grades at a period very long before the beginning of the 18th century.

These statements, still believed in by all Masons who have not made the history of the Order an especial study, were, until recently, received by prominent scholars as true. Even Dr. Oliver, one of the most learned as well as the most abundant of Masonic authors, has in his numerous works recognized them as historic truths without a word of protest or a sign of doubt, except, perhaps, with reference to the third legend above



mentioned, of which he says, with a cautious exception, that he has "some doubts whether the Master's degree, as now given, can be traced three centuries backwards."<sup>1</sup>

But now there is a school of Masonic students, to whom, borrowing a word formerly used in the history of religious strifes, has been given the name of "iconoclasts." The word is a good one. The old iconoclasts, or image-breakers of the 8th century, demolished the images and defaced the pictures which they found in the churches. This they did through mistaken but earnest views, because they thought that the people were taking the shadow for the substance and were worshipping the image or the picture instead of the Divine Being thus represented.

And so these Masonic iconoclasts, with better views, are destroying, by hard, cutting criticism, the intellectual images which the old unlettered Masons had constructed for their veneration. They are pulling to pieces the myths and legends, whose errors and absurdities so long cast a cloud upon what ought to be the clear sky of Masonic history. But they have tempered their zeal with a knowledge and a moderation that were unknown to the iconoclasts of religion. These shattered the images and scattered the fragments to the four winds of heaven, or they burnt the picture so that not even a remnant of the canvas was left. Whatever there was of beauty in the work of the sculptor or painter was forever destroyed. Every sentiment of art culture was overcome by the bitterness of religious bigots. Had the destructive labors of these iconoclasts been everywhere and long continued, no foundation would have been left for building that science of Christian symbolism, which in this day has been so interesting and so instructive to the student of ancient remains and records.<sup>2</sup>

Not so have the Masonic iconoclasts performed their task of critical reform. They have shattered nothing; they have destroyed nothing. When in the course of their investigations into true Masonic history they encounter a myth or a legend,

<sup>1</sup> "Dissertation on the State of Masonry in the Eighteenth Century."

<sup>2</sup> Thus the Emperor Leo, the Isaurian, caused all images and pictures to be removed from the churches and publicly burnt—an act of brutish folly not surpassed by that Saracen despot who (if the story be true) ignorantly committed the books of the Alexandrian library to the flames as fuel for the public baths.



replete, apparently, with absurdities or contradictions, they do not set it aside as something unworthy of consideration, but they dissect it into its various parts; they analyze it with critical shrewdness; they separate the chaff from the wheat; they accept the portion that is confirmed by other and incidental evidence as a trustworthy addition to history; what is undoubtedly false they receive as a myth, and either reject it altogether as an unmeaning variation of a legend, or explain it as the expression of some symbolic idea which is itself of value in a historical point of view.

That lamented student of ancient remains, George Smith, late of the British Museum, in speaking of the cuneiform or wedge-shaped-letter inscriptions dug up in Mesopotamia, and the legends which they have preserved of the old Babylonian empire, said:<sup>1</sup> "With regard to the supernatural element introduced into the story, it is similar in nature to many such additions to historical narratives, especially in the East; but I would not reject those events which may have happened, because, in order to illustrate a current belief, or add to the romance of the story, the writer has introduced the supernatural."

It is on this very principle that the iconoclastic Masonic writers, such as Hughan and Woodford, pursued their researches into the early history of Freemasonry. They did not reject those events related in the old legends, which have certainly happened, because in them they find also mythical narratives. They do not yield to the tendency which George Smith further says is now too general, "to repudiate the earlier part of history, because of its evident inaccuracies and the marvelous element generally combined with it." It is in this way, and in this way only, that early Masonic history can be rightly written. Made up, as it has been for centuries past, of a mixture of historical truths and legendary invention, it has been heretofore read without wise care. Either the traditional account has been wholly accepted as historical, or it has been wholly rejected as false, and thus, in either case, numerous errors have been the result.

As an example of the error which always results from pursuing either of these methods of interpretation, one of which may

<sup>1</sup> "Chaldean Account of Genesis," p. 302.



be defined as the school of gross credulity and the other as that of great skepticism—on the one hand too easily satisfied with weak evidence and on the other but slowly admitting strong proof—let us take the legend of the Temple origin of Masonry, that is to say, the legend which places the organization of the institution at the time of the building of the temple at Jerusalem.

Now, the former of these schools takes for granted the whole legend as true in all its details. That school recognizes King Solomon as the first Grand Master, with Hiram of Tyre and Hiram Abif as his Wardens, who, with him, presided over the Craft, divided into three degrees, the initiation into which they claim was the same as that practiced in the lodges of the present day, or at least not very unlike it.

Thus Dr. Anderson who was the first to publish this legend and the theory that is founded upon it, says, in the second edition of his "Constitutions," that Hiram Abif, "in Solomon's absence, filled the chair as Deputy Grand Master, and, in his presence, was the Senior Grand Warden"; and, again, that "Solomon partitioned the Fellow Crafts into certain lodges, with a Master and Wardens in each"; and, lastly, that "Solomon was Grand Master of all Masons at Jerusalem. King Hiram was Grand Master at Tyre, and Hiram Abif had been Master of Work."<sup>1</sup>

The modern rituals have made some changes in these details, but we evidently see here the original source of the legend as it has been generally believed by the Fraternity. Indeed, so firmly convinced of its truth are the believers in this legend, that the brand of the faithless is placed by them on all who deny or doubt it.

On the contrary, the disciples of the one school, whose skepticism is as excessive as is the credulity of the former, reject as untrue everything that tends to connect Freemasonry with the Solomonic temple. To the King of Israel they refuse all honor and they deny with contempt the theory that he was a Masonic officer, or even a Freemason at all. One of these skeptics has gone so far as to attack the memory of the Jewish monarch with unnecessary and unmerited abuse.

<sup>1</sup> Anderson, "Constitutions," chap. iii, pages 12, 13, 15.



Between these two parties, each of which is led astray by an intemperate zeal, come the iconoclasts—impartial inquirers, who calmly and earnestly seek for truth only. These do not accept, it is true, the authority of the Temple legend in its present form. They deny that there is any proof which a historian could, by applying the just laws of criticism, admit as sufficient evidence, that Freemasonry was organized at the building of the temple of Solomon, and therefore they look for its origin to have been at some other time and under different circumstances.

But they do not reject the myth connected with the temple as being wholly unworthy of consideration. On the contrary, they respect this legend as having a symbolic meaning whose value can not be overestimated. They trace its rise in the Old Constitutions of Freemasonry; they find it plainly mentioned in the *Legend of the Craft*; and they follow it to its full growth in the modern rituals. Thus they note the influence that the story of the temple and its builders has exerted on the inner construction of the Order, and hence they feel no disposition to treat it, notwithstanding its historical inaccuracy, with contempt.

They know what an important part the legends and symbols of Freemasonry have performed in the progress of the institution. They are aware how much its philosophic system is indebted to these factors for all that is peculiar to Freemasonry. Therefore they devote their literary energies, not to the blotting out of this or any other myth or legend, but to the search of how and when it arose, and what is its real meaning as a symbol, or what foundation as a narrative it may have in history. And thus they are enabled to add important items to the mass of true Masonic history which they have gathered.

In short, the theory of the iconoclastic school is that truth and authority must always and in the first place be sought; that nothing must be accepted as historical which has not the inner and outer evidences of historical verity, and that in treating the legends of Masonry—of almost every one of which it may be said “*Se non è vero, è molto ben trovato*”<sup>1</sup>—*if it is not true, it is very well invented*—we are not to reject them as

<sup>1</sup> Bruno in his “*Gli Eroici Furori*” (1585).



mere fables, but as having some hidden and esoteric meaning, which, as in the case of all other symbols, we must diligently seek to discover. But if it be found that the legend has no symbolic meaning, but is simply the crippling of a historical fact, we must carefully remove the false growth, and leave the body of truth to which it had been added, to have its just value.

Such was the method pursued by the ancient philosophers of Greece and Rome; and Plato, Anaxagoras, and Cicero explained the apparent absurdities of the early myths by treating them as parables.

To this school of interpretation we have for years been strongly attached and in the composition of this work we shall adopt its principles. We do not fear that the claims of Freemasonry to a time-honored existence will be injured by any historical criticism, although the era in which it had its birth may not be admitted to be as remote as that given to it by Anderson or Oliver.

Iconoclastic criticism can not lower but will the rather elevate the character of the institution. Such criticism will free it of absurdities, will often explain the cause of the illogical, will purify the unreal element, and confine it within the strict domain of history.

It was a common reproach against the great Niebuhr that he had overthrown the whole fabric of early Roman history. Yet Dr. Arnold, the most competent of critics, has said of him that he had built up much more than he had destroyed, and fixed on firm historical ground much that modern skepticism had rejected as fables.

Following such a method as that pursued by the most learned of modern historians, it will be necessary, for a faithful and thorough inquiry of the history of Freemasonry to carefully separate the two periods into which it may be naturally divided,

The HISTORIC and

The PREHISTORIC.

The HISTORIC is the period within which we have genuine documents in reference to the existence of the Order.

The PREHISTORIC is the period within which we have no such records, and where we have to depend wholly on legends and traditions.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE LEGENDARY HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY



OR every ancient nation there is a prehistoric and a historic period.

The prehistoric period is then that earlier stage of existence which has left to us no records to prove the truth of the events that have been credited to it. Such remains as we possess of that period are quite often made up of myths and legends, founded—some of them, in all probability—on a tangling of historical facts, and others are indebted entirely to the imagination for their invention.

The historic period is that which begins with that account of events which is supported by documents, either of the same date as the events themselves or so recently after them as to have nearly all the strength of promptly recorded evidence.

Just such a division of periods as this we find in the history of Freemasonry.

The prehistoric period, to which belongs what is most commonly styled the legendary history, includes the time, remote or more recent, of the rise and progress of the institution, and the legends detailing events said to have occurred, but having no proof of their occurrence other than that of mouth-to-ear tradition unsupported by that sort of documentary evidence which is necessary to give a reliable character to a historical statement.

The historic period of Freemasonry begins with the time from which we have written or printed records to furnish the necessary testimony that the events mentioned did actually occur.

In treating of the history of nations, scholars have found great difficulty in precisely defining the limits of separation between the prehistoric and the historic periods. As in natural history, it is almost impossible to place the exact boundary line



between any two neighboring classes of the kingdoms of nature so as to distinguish the highest species of a vegetable from the lowest of an animal organization, so in political history it is difficult to tell when the prehistoric period ends and the historic begins.

In Freemasonry we meet with the same difficulties and these are increased according to the different standpoints from which we view the institution.

Suppose we adopt the theory (as has been done by a few writers too iconoclastic in their views) that Speculative Masonry never was anything but that which its present organization presents, with Grand Lodges, Grand Masters, and a ritual of distinct degrees. Then we are compelled to place the commencement of the historic era at that event in the second decade of the 18th century which has been called the Revival.

If, with more liberal views, we entertain the opinion that Speculative Masonry was founded on and is the offspring of the old Operative system of the Stonemasons, then we must extend our researches to at least the Middle Ages. There we shall find abundant documents, evidence of the existence and character of the Operative parent to which the Freemasonry of the present day, by a well-marked succession, has fallen heir.

Connecting the written history of the Operative Masons with that of its speculative successor, we have a trustworthy and continuous history that will carry us back to a period many centuries before the time of the so-called Revival in the year 1717.

Sometime in the preceding century there was an era of which there are documents to prove that membership conditions were changing and that a speculative element was growing in the Operative system.

A history of Freemasonry, of which the Operative and the Speculative systems are divisions, intimately connected, is required to go farther than 1717, and to the rise and the progress of the Operative art as the forerunner and the founder of the Speculative science.

The accredited details of the condition of Operative Masonry in the Middle Ages, of its connection, if it had any, with other organizations, and its later changes into Speculative Masonry,



will be the historical account, the chronicles and narrative of Freemasonry.

Its prehistoric account will be found in the myths and legends which, unfortunately, were for a long time accepted by the great body of the Craft as a true history, but which, though still credited as formerly by many, are placed by most modern Masonic scholars in their proper position.

These legends, some of which are preserved in the rituals, and some are becoming almost out of use, have a common foundation in that traditional narrative which is known as the *Legend of the Craft*.<sup>1</sup> This relic must first be understood before we can with satisfaction attempt to study the legendary history of the institution.

But this legend is of such length and of so much importance that it demands for its consideration a separate and distinct chapter.

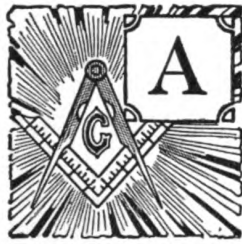
We, by no means, intend to advance the proposition that all the myths and legends now taught in the Lodges, or preserved in the works of Masonic writers, are to be found in the *Legend of the Craft*. Only the most important—those that are still recognized by the less critical portion of the Fraternity as genuine and accredited reports—receive their first notice in the *Legend of the Craft*, although they are indebted for their present fuller form to larger unfolding or ripening, afterwards made in the course of the construction of the modern ritual.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Bro. Woodford calls it the "Legend of the Gild." But we prefer the title here used, because it does not lead thus early in our studies to awkward questions as to the relation of the Gilds of the Middle Ages, say from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries, to Freemasonry.



## CHAPTER THREE

### THE OLD MANUSCRIPTS



ANDERSON tells us, in the second edition of the *Book of Constitutions*, that in the year 1719, "at some private Lodges several very valuable manuscripts concerning the Fraternity, their Lodges, Regulations, Charges, Secrets, and Usages, were too hastily burnt by scrupulous Brothers, that these papers might not fall into strange hands."<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately, this destruction was not general. The writings mentioned by Anderson were undoubtedly those Old Constitutions of the Operative Masons, several copies of which, that had escaped the fiery sacrifices described by him, have since been discovered in the British Museum, in old libraries, or in the archives of Lodges, and have been published by those who have discovered them.<sup>2</sup>

These are the documents which have received the title of "Old Records," "Old Charges," or "Old Constitutions." Their general character is the same. Indeed, there is so much likeness, and almost identity, to be noted among their contents as to cause the belief that they are copies of some earlier document not yet recovered.

<sup>1</sup> Anderson's "Constitutions," p. 111 (1738).

<sup>2</sup> Among these writers we must not omit to mention Bro. William James Hughan, easily the leader of all Masonic discoverers, who made in 1872 a valuable contribution to this literature under the title of "The Old Charges of the British Freemasons," the value of which is increased by the learned Preface of Bro. A. F. A. Woodford. Since the first part of this paragraph was written by Bro. Mackey a second series of "The Old Charges" has been published by Bro. Hughan, and in the reports of the famous literary lodge, the *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, and elsewhere there have appeared many excellent essays on the subject by Bros. R. F. Gould, G. E. W. Begemann, R. H. Baxter, and others who have by close study found out points of great interest in locating the places where these records were written, the relation they bear to our rituals, and other important matters.



The earliest of these documents is a manuscript poem, entitled the *Constitutiones artis geometricæ secundum Eucleydem*,<sup>1</sup> which is preserved in the British Museum, and which was published in 1840 by J. O. Halliwell, in his *Early History of Freemasonry in England*. A second and enlarged edition was published by him in 1844. Reprints have since appeared, an especially useful one being that of Quatuor Coronati Lodge in 1889. The date of this manuscript is supposed to be about the year 1390 though a few critics have preferred to place it a little later.

The next of the English manuscripts is that which was published in 1861 by Bro. Matthew Cooke from the original in the British Museum, and which was once the property of Mrs. Caroline Baker, from whom it was purchased in 1859 by the Curators of the Museum. The date of this manuscript is supposed to be about 1450. Some have credited it with being even earlier.

All the English Masonic students of these writings agree in the opinion that this manuscript is next in antiquity to the Halliwell poem, though there is a difference of nearly one hundred years between their dates. It is, however, mere guesswork to say that there were not other manuscripts in the intervening period. But as none have been discovered, they must be considered as non-existent, and it is impossible even to judge, from any groundwork on which we can stand, whether, if such manuscripts did ever exist, they had more of the features of the Halliwell or of the Cooke document, or whether they presented the form of a gradual change and chain from the one to the other.

The Cooke MS. is far more developed in its arrangement and its details than the Halliwell, and contains the *Legend of the Craft* in a more extended form.

In the absence of any other earlier document of the same kind, it must be considered as the matrix or mould, as it were, in which that Legend, in the form in which it appears in all the later manuscripts, was first shaped.

In the year 1815, James Dowland published, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*,<sup>2</sup> the copy of an old manuscript which had lately

<sup>1</sup> Meaning the constitutions of the geometrical art according to Euclid. The latter lived three hundred years before Christ and his books on the elements of geometry are still in great favor.

<sup>2</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 85, p. 489, May, 1815.



come into his possession, and which he described as being "written on a long roll of parchment, in a very clear hand, apparently early in the 17th century, and very probably is copied from a manuscript of an earlier date." Although not as old as the Halliwell<sup>1</sup> and Cooke MSS., it is deemed of very great value, because it comes next to them in date, and is apparently the first of that series of later manuscripts, so many of which have, within the past few years, been recovered. It is evidently based on the Cooke MS., though not an exact copy of it. But the later manuscripts comprising that series, at the head of which it stands, so much resemble it in details, and even in phrases, that they must either have been copies made from it, or, what is far more probable, they are copies of some older and common original, of which it also is a copy.

The original manuscript which was used by Dowland for the publication in the *Gentleman's Magazine* can not now be found by us. But Bro. Woodford and other competent authorities set the year 1550 as being about its date.

Several other manuscript Constitutions, whose dates vary from the middle of the 16th to the beginning of the 18th century, have since been discovered and published, principally by the industrious labors of Brothers Hughan and Woodford in England, and Brother Lyon in Scotland.

The following list gives the titles and probable dates of the most important of these early manuscripts:<sup>2</sup>

Halliwell MS. . . . .	1390.
Cooke MS. . . . .	1450.
Dowland MS. . . . .	1550.
Grand Lodge MS. No. 1 . . . . .	1583.
Lansdowne MS. . . . .	1600.
York MS., No. 1 . . . . .	1600.
John T. Thorp MS. . . . .	1629.
Sloane MS., No. 3848 . . . . .	1646.
Taylor MS. . . . .	1650.
Harleian MS., No. 1942. . . . .	1650.
Sloane MS., No. 3323 . . . . .	1659.
Harleian MS., No. 2054. . . . .	1660.

<sup>1</sup> This manuscript is frequently known as the "Regius MS." because it once formed part of the Royal Library founded by Henry VII. and given to the British Museum by George II.

<sup>2</sup> See a list of nearly eighty of these old manuscripts in the Mackey-Hughan-Hawkins Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, for dates, owners, etc.



Edinburgh-Kilwinning MS. . . . .	1665.
Aitcheson-Haven MS. . . . .	1666.
Stanley MS. . . . .	1677.
T. W. Tew MS. . . . .	1680.
Lodge of Antiquity MS. . . . .	1686.
William Watson MS. . . . .	1687.
Alnwick MS. . . . .	1701.
Papworth MS. . . . .	1720.

Nearly all of these manuscripts, the Halliwell being an exception, begin with an invocation to the Trinity. Then follow remarks on the seven liberal arts and sciences, of which the fifth, or Geometry, is said to be Masonry. This is succeeded by a traditional history of Masonry, from the days of Lamech to the reign of King Athelstan of England. The manuscripts conclude with a series of "charges," or regulations, for the government of the Craft while they were of a purely operative character.

The traditional history which forms the first part of these "Old Records" is full of historical errors, with mistakes in dates, and even with absurdities. And yet it is valuable, because it forms the germ of that system of Masonic study which was afterward developed by such writers as Anderson, Preston, and Oliver, and from whose errors the iconoclasts of the present day are successfully striving to free the institution, so as to give it a more rational and methodical history.

This traditional history is presented to us in all the manuscripts, in about the same form, or, at least, with very slight differences of words and phrases. These differences are, indeed, so slight that they suggest the strong probability of a common source for all these documents, either in the mouth-to-ear teaching of the older Masons, or in some earlier record that has not yet been recovered. The tradition seems always to have secured the full belief of the Fraternity as a true relation of the origin and the progress of Masonry. Therefore it has received the title of the *Legend of the Craft*.

From the great care with which many manuscripts containing this legend were destroyed in 1719 by "scrupulous brothers" who were opposed to its publication, we might believe that it formed a part of the private instructions of the Gild of Operative Masons. If so, it lost this secret character by the publication of Roberts's edition of the "Constitutions" in 1722.



















In the earlier German and French Masonic records, such as the *Ordenung der Steinmetzen* (Constitutions of the Stonemasons) at Strasburg in 1459, and the *Reglements sur les Arts et Metiers* (Laws on the Arts and Trades) at Paris in the 12th century, there is no appearance of this legend. But it does not follow from this that no such legend existed among the French and German Masons. Indeed, as it is well known that early English Operative Masonry was derived from the continent, it is natural to suppose that the continental Masons brought the legend into England.

There is evidence in the English, French and German manuscripts of additions from the one to the other. The reference in the Legend to Charles Martel connects with the French Masonry of the 12th century, and the invocation to the "Four Crowned Martyrs" in the Halliwell MS. compares similarly with that in the German Statutes.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of this Legend in the influence that it exerted for a long period on the Craft as the accredited history of the institution makes it necessary that it should form a part of any work that professes to treat of the history of Freemasonry.

The fact of the Legend having been known in England for so many centuries led Bro. A. F. A. Woodford to suggest that the proposed lodge of students of Freemasonry, No. 2076, to be formed under the English Constitution at London, should be called the "Quatuor Coronati," a proposal that was accepted in spite of the singular name.

<sup>1</sup> Die heiligen Vier gekrönten, "Ordenung der Steinmetzen, zu Strasburg, 1459," and in all the other German Constitutions. Findel thinks that this invocation to the Four Crowned Martyrs "must be regarded as a most decided proof of the identity of the German and English Stonemasons, and of their having one common parentage." ("Geschichte der Frei Maurerei." Lyon's translation, p. 31.)



## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE LEGEND OF THE CRAFT



HE might of the Father of Kings,<sup>1</sup> with the wisdom of his glorious Son, through the grace of the goodness of the Holy Ghost, there bene three persons in one Godheade, be with us at our beginnunge, and give us grace so to governe us here in this mortall life liveinge, that we may come to his kingdome that never shall have endinje. Amen.

“Good Bretheren and Followes: Our purpose is to tell you how and in what manner this worthy science of Masonrye was begunne, and afterwards how it was favoured by worthy Kings and Princes, and by many other worshippfull<sup>2</sup> men. And also to those that be willinge, wee will declare the charge that belongeth to any true Mason to keepe for in good faith. And yee have good heede thereto; it is well worthy to be well kept for a worthy craft and a curious science.

“For there be Seaven liberall Sciences, of the which seaven it is one of them. And the names of the Seaven Seyences bene these: First is Grammere, and it teacheth man to speake truly and write truly. And the second is Rhethoricke; and teacheth a man to speake faire in subtile termes. And the third is Dialectyke; and teacheth a man for to discern or know truth from false. And the fourth is Arithmeticke; and that teacheth a man for to reckon and to accompte all manner of numbers. And the fifth is called Geometrie; and that teacheth mett<sup>3</sup> and measure of earth and of all other things; of the which science is called

<sup>1</sup> In the Lansdowne and many other MSS., the formula is “the Father of the Heavens,” or “of Heaven.”

<sup>2</sup> “Worship” is today a word meaning homage to the Deity but formerly it was generally applied as denoting any one worthy of honor.

<sup>3</sup> A word meaning “boundary” or “landmark” and still used in the expression “metes and bounds.”



Masonrye. And the sixth science is called Musicke; and that teacheth a man of songe and voice, of tongue and orgaine, harpe and trompe. And the seaventh science is called Astronome; and that teacheth a man the course of the sunn, moone and starrs. These be the Seaven liberall Sciences, the which bene all founded by one Science, that is to say Geometrie. And this may a man prove, that the science of the work is founded by Geometrie, for Geometrie teacheth a man mett and measure, ponderation and weight, of all manner of things on earth, for there is no man that worketh any science, but he worketh by some mett or measure, nor no man that buyeth or selleth, but he buyeth or selleth by some measure or by some weight, and all these is Geometrie. And these use merchants and all craftsmen, and all other of the Seaven Sciences, and in especiall the plowman and tillers of all manner of grounds, graynes, vynes, flowers and setters of other fruits; for Grammere or Retricke, neither Astronomie nor none of all the other Seaven Sciences can no manner find mett nor measure without Geometrie. Wherefore methinketh that the science of Geometrie is most worthy, and that findeth<sup>1</sup> all other.

"How that these worthy Sciences were first begunne, I shall you tell. Before Noye's flood, there was a man called Lameche, as it is written in the Byble in the iijth chapter of Genesis; and this Lameche had two wives, and the one height<sup>2</sup> Ada, and that other height Sella; by his first wife Ada he gott two sons, and that one Jabell and thother Tuball, and by that other wife Sella he got a son and a daughter. And these four children founden the beginning of all sciences in the world. And this elder son Jabell found the science of Geometrie, and he departed flocks of sheep and lambs in the field, and first wrought house of stone and tree,<sup>3</sup> as is noted in the chapter above said. And his brother Tuball found the science of musicke, songe of tonge, harp and

<sup>1</sup> Used in its early Anglo-Saxon meaning of "to invent, to devise." Geometry invented or devised all the other sciences. "Findeth," meaning to found or lay the foundation.

<sup>2</sup> An old English word meaning "named."

<sup>3</sup> An instance of the inaccuracy of these old records in historical details. So far from Jabal being the first who "wrought house of stone and tree," he was the founder of the wanderer's life in which such fixed buildings are never used. He invented tents, made most probably of skins, to be the movable homes of a shepherd people, led by the pressure of a want of food to remove their flocks from time to time to new fields.



orgaine. And the third brother, Tuball Cain, found smith-craft of gold, silver, copper, iron and steele; and the daughter found the craft of Weaving. And these children knew well that God would take vengeance for synn, either by fire or by water; wherefore the writt their science that they had found in two pillars of stone, that they might be found after Noye's flood. And that one stone was marble, for that would not burn with fire; and that other stone was clepped<sup>1</sup> laterns,<sup>2</sup> and would not drown in noe water.

"Our intent is to tell you trulie how and in what manner these stones were found that these sciences were written in. The great Hermarynes, that was Cuby's son, the which Cub was Sem's son, that was Noy's son. This Hermarynes afterwards was called Harmes, the father of wise men; he found one of the two pillars of stone, and found the science written there, and he taught it to other men. And at the making of the Tower of Babylon there was Masonrye first made much of. And the Kinge of Babylon that height Nemrothe,<sup>3</sup> was a mason himself; and loved well the science, and it is said with masters of histories. And when the City of Nyneve and other cities of the East should be made, Nemrothe, the King of Babylon, sent thither three score Masons at the roagation of the King of Nyneve, his cosen. And when he sent them forth, he gave them a charge on this manner. That they should be true each of them to other, and that they should love truly together, and that they should serve their lord truly for their pay; soe that the master may have worshipp and all that long to him. And other moe charges he gave them. And this was the first time that ever Masons had any charge of his science.

"Moreover when Abraham and Sara his wife went into Egipt, there he taught the Seaven Sciences to the Egiptians; and he had a worthy scoller that height Ewclyde,<sup>4</sup> and he learned right well and was a master of all the vij Sciences lib-

<sup>1</sup> An Anglo-Saxon word for "called."

<sup>2</sup> This word is a corruption of the Latin "later," a brick or tile.

<sup>3</sup> Nimrod.

<sup>4</sup> Bro. Matthew Cooke, in his Notes to the MS. which he was the first to publish, and which thence bears his name, protests against being held responsible for this as history which makes Abraham and Euclid of the same time, one a teacher of the other. It should the rather be read as a parable and that this legend of Euclid is merely a symbol.



erall. And in his days it befell that the lord and 'the estates of the realme had soe many sonns that they had gotten, some by their wives and some by other ladyes of the realme; for that land is a hott land and a plentious of generacion. And they had not competent livelode to find with their children, wherefor they made much care, and then the king of the land made a great Counsell and a Parliament, to witt, how they might find their children honestly as gentlemen; and they could find no manner of good way. And then they did crye through all the realme, if there were any man that informe them, that he should come to them, and he should be soe rewarded for his travail, that he should hold him pleased.

"After that this crye was made, then came this worthy clarke<sup>1</sup> Ewclyde and said to the king and all his great lords, 'If yee will take me your children to governe, and to teach them one of the Seaven Scyences, wherewith they may live honestly as gentlemen should, under a condition, that yee will grant me and them a commission that I may have power to rule them after the manner that the science ought to be ruled.' And that the kinge and all his Counsell granted to him anone<sup>2</sup> and sealed their commission. And then this worthy Doctor tooke to him these lord's sonns, and taught them the scyence of Geometrie in practice, for to work in stones all manner of worthy worke that belongeth to buildinge churches, temples, castells, towres, and mannors, and all other manner of buildings; and he gave them a charge in this manner.

"The first was that they should be true to the Kynge, and to the Lord that they owe. And that they should love well together and be true each one to other. And that they should call each other his fellowe or else brother and not by servant nor his knave, nor none other foul name. And that they should deserve their paie of the lord or of the master that they serve. And that they should ordaine the wisest of them to be master of the worke and nether for love nor great lynneage, ne<sup>3</sup> riches ne for no favour to lett another that hath little conning<sup>4</sup> for to be master of the

<sup>1</sup> Name given to the learned in the Middle Ages because learning was usually then confined to the clerics or clergy.

<sup>2</sup> "At once."

<sup>3</sup> "Nor."

<sup>4</sup> "Skill."



lord's worke, wherethrough the lord should be evill served and they ashamed. And also that they should call their governors of the worke, Master,<sup>1</sup> in the time that they worke with him. And other many moe charges that longe to tell. And to all these charges he made them to sweare a great oath that men used in that time; and ordayned them for reasonable wages, that they might live honestly by. And also that they should come and semble together every yeare once, how they might worke best to serve the lord for his profitt and to their own worshipp; and to correct within themselves him that had trespassed against the science. And thus was the seyence grounded there; and that worthy Mr. Ewclyde gave it the name of Geometrie. And now it is called through all this land, Masonrye.

"Sythen longe after,<sup>2</sup> when the children of Israell were coming into the land of Beheast,<sup>3</sup> that is now called amongst us, the country of Jhrlm. Kinge David began the Temple that they called *Templum D'ni*, and it is named with us the Temple of Jerusalem. And the same Kinge David loved Masons well and cherished them much, and gave them good paie. And he gave the charges and the manners as he had learned of Egipt given by Ewclyde, and other charges moe that ye shall heare afterward. And after the decease of Kinge David, Solomon, that was David's sonn, performed out the Temple that his father begonne; and sent after Masons into divers countries and of divers lands; and gathered them together, so that he had four-score thousand workers of stone, and were all named Masons. And he chose out of them three thousand that were ordayned to be masters and governors of his worke. And furthermore there was a Kinge of another region that men called Iram,<sup>4</sup> and he loved well Kinge Solomon and he gave him tymber to his worke. And he had a sonn that height Aynon,<sup>5</sup> and he was a Master of Geometrie, and was chief Master of all his Masons, and was

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes written "Mr." as below in this paragraph.

<sup>2</sup> "Since then long after"—long after that time.

<sup>3</sup> The Land of Promise, or the Promised Land. "Beheste Promissio," says the Promptorium Parvulorum.

<sup>4</sup> It is scarcely necessary to explain that this is meant for Hiram.

<sup>5</sup> The true origin and meaning of this name, for which some of the modern Speculative Masons have substituted Hiram Abif, and others Adoniram, will be discussed.



Master of all his gravings and carvinge, and of all manner of Masonrye that longed to the Temple; and this is witnessed by the Bible, *in libro Regum*,<sup>1</sup> the third chapter. And this Solomon confirmed both charges and the manners that his father had given to Masons. And thus was that worthy Science of Masonrye confirmed in the country of Jerusalem, and in many other kingdoms.

“Curious craftsmen walked about full wide into divers countreyes, some because of learning more craft and cunning, and some to teach them that had but little cunnyng. And soe it befell that there was one curious Mason that height Maymus Grecus,<sup>2</sup> that had been at the making of Solomon’s Temple, and he came into France, and there he taught the science of Masonrye to men of France. And there was one of the Regal line of France that height Charles Martell;<sup>3</sup> and he was a man that loved well such a science, and drew to this Maymus Grecus that is above-said, and learned of him the science, and tooke upon him the charges and manners; and afterwards by the grace of God, he was elect to be Kinge of Fraunce. And when he was in his estate, he tooke Masons, and did helpe to make men Masons that were none; and set them to worke, and gave them both the charge and the manners and good paie, as he had learned of other Masons; and confirmed them a charter from yeare to yeare, to hold their semble when they would; and cherished them right much; and thus came this science into Fraunce.

“England in all this season stood voyd, as for any charge of Masonrye unto St. Albones<sup>4</sup> tyme. And in his days the King of England that was a Pagan, he did wall the towne about, that is called Sainct Albones. And Sainct Albones was a worthy Knight and stewart with the Kinge of his household and had governance of the realme, and also of the makinge of the town walls; and loved well Masons and cherished them much. And he made their paie right good, standing as the realme did; for he gave them *ij.s. vj.d.* a weeke and *iiij.d.* to their none-

<sup>1</sup> Referring to the Book of Kings.

<sup>2</sup> This name has long been a troublesome puzzle. We shall give the later results of study. We shall refer to it in a following page.

<sup>3</sup> The mention of this king in the Legend will lead us later on to an inquiry into an interesting period of French Masonic history.

<sup>4</sup> St. Alban, the first martyr of England. Of his connection with the Legend, more hereafter.



synches.<sup>1</sup> And before that time, through all this land, a Mason tooke but a penny a day and his meate, till Sainct Albones amended it, and gave them a chartour of the Kinge and his Counsell for to hold a general councell, and gave it the name of Assemble; and thereat he was himselfe, and helped to make Masons and gave them charges as you shall heare afterward.

"Right soon after the decease of Sainct Albone, there came divers wars into the realme of England of divers Nations soe that the good rule of Masonrye was destroyed unto the tyme of Kinge Athelstone's days that was a worthy Kinge of England and brought this land into good rest and peace; and builded many great works of Abbyes and Toures, and other many divers buildings; and loved well Masons. And he had a sonne that height Edwinne, and he loved Masons much more than his father did. And he was a great practiser in Geometrie; and he drew him much to talke and to commune with Masons, and to learn of them science; and afterwards for love that he had to Masons, and to the science, he was made Mason, and he gatt of the Kinge his father, a Chartour and Commission to hold every yeare once an Assemble, wher that ever they would, within the realme of England; and to correct within themselves defaults and trespasses that were done within the science. And he held himselfe an Assemble at Yorke,<sup>2</sup> and these he made Masons, and gave them charges, and taught them the manners, and commanded that rule to be kept ever after, and tooke then the chartour and commission to keepe, and made ordinance that it should be renewed from kinge to kinge.

"And when the Assemble was gathered he made a cry that all old Masons and young that had any writeinge or understanding of the charges and the manners that were made before in this land, or in any other, that they should show them forth. And when it was proved, there were founden some in French, and some in Greek, and some in English and some in other lan-

<sup>1</sup> A corruption of the old English word *noonshun*, from which comes our modern *luncheon*. It meant the refreshment taken at noon, when laborers desist from work to *shun* the heat. It may here mean subsistence in general. St. Alban gave his Masons two shillings and six pence a week and three pence for their daily food. (See *Nonesynches* in the Mackey-Hughan-Hawkins' "Encyclopædia of Freemasonry.")

<sup>2</sup> This part of the Legend which refers to Prince Edwin and the Assembly at York is so important that it demands and will receive a further examination.



guages; and the intent of them all was founden all one. And he did make a booke thereof, and how the science was founded. And he himselfe bad and commanded that it should be readd or tould, when that any Mason should be made for to give him his charge. And fro that day into this tyme manners of Masons have been kept in that form as well as men might governe it. And furthermore divers Assembles have beene put and ordayned certain charges by the best advice of Masters and fellows."

Then follow the charges that are thus said to have been enacted at York and at other General Assemblies, but which properly constitute no part of the Legend, at least no part connected with the legendary details of the rise and progress of the institution. The Legend ends with the account of the holding of an Assembly at York, and other later ones, for the purpose of making laws for the government of the Order.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE HALLIWELL POEM AND THE LEGEND



HERE is one manuscript which varies so much from others in its form and in its contents as to afford the strongest inside evidence that it has come down to us from a source entirely different from that which gave origin to other and later documents.

We refer to what is known to Masonic antiquaries as the Halliwell or Regius MS. As this is admitted to be the oldest Masonic document in existence, and as some very important conclusions in respect to the early history of the Craft are about to be drawn from it, a detailed account of it will not be deemed out of place.

This work was first published in 1840 by Mr. James Orchard Halliwell, under the title of "A Poem on the Constitutions of Masonry,"<sup>1</sup> from the original manuscript in the King's Library of the British Museum. Mr. Halliwell, who afterwards adopted the name of Phillips, is not a member of the Brotherhood, and Woodford appropriately remarks that "it is somewhat curious that to Grandidier and Halliwell, both non-Masons, Freemasonry owes the impetus given at separate epochs to the study of its archæology and history."<sup>2</sup>

Halliwell says that the manuscript formerly belonged to Charles Theyer, a well-known collector of the 17th century. It is undoubtedly the oldest Masonic MS. there is. Messrs. Bond and Egerton of the British Museum consider its date to be about the middle of the 15th century. Kloss<sup>3</sup> thinks that it was written between the years 1427 and 1445. Dr.

<sup>1</sup> In a pamphlet entitled "The Early History of Freemasonry in England." An improved edition was published in 1844.

<sup>2</sup> In Kenning's "Encyclopædia," see *Halliwell*.

<sup>3</sup> "Die Freimaurerei in ihrer wahren Bedeutung." S. 12.



Oliver<sup>1</sup> claims that it is a copy of the Book of Constitutions adopted by the General Assembly, held in the year 926, at the City of York. Halliwell himself places the date of the MS. at 1390. Woodford<sup>2</sup> agrees with this estimate. We are of the same opinion today.

The manuscript is in rhymed verse, and consists of 794 lines. At the head of the poem is the inscription: "*Hic incipiunt constitutiones artis geometriæ secundum Euclidem.*"<sup>3</sup> The language is older than that of Wicliffe's version of the Bible, which was written toward the end of the 14th century, but in Bro. Mackey's opinion approaches very nearly to that of the Chronicles of Robert of Gloucester, the date of which was at the beginning of the same century.

Bro. Begemann in the *Zirkelcorrespondenz*, the journal published by the National Grand Lodge, Berlin, has had several articles on the subject. He concludes that the study of early English speech indicates that the original manuscript was compiled between 1380 and 1400 in the north of Gloucestershire or in Herefordshire or perhaps in the south of Worcestershire, three counties in the west of England. With all respect to these conclusions we remind the reader that the dialect study while important as to dates does not with certainty locate the maker of the manuscript though it does show where the peculiar words were in use. He may have written the words far from where he was taught them.

Lines 1-86 of this MS. contain the history of the origin of geometry, or Masonry, and the story of Euclid is given at length, much like that which is in the *Legend of the Craft*. But no other parts of that Legend are mentioned, except the portion which records the introduction of Masonry into England. From the establishment of Masonry in Egypt by Euclid, the poem passes immediately to the time when the "craft com ynto Englund." Here the legendary story is given of King Athelstan and the Assembly called by him, with this variation from the common Legend, that there is no mention of the city of York where the Assembly is said to have been held, nor of Prince Edwin who summoned it.

<sup>1</sup> *American Quarterly Review of Freemasonry*, vol. i, p. 547.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to Hughan's "Old Charges," p. vii.

<sup>3</sup> "Here begin the Constitutions of the Art of Geometry according to Euclid."



Lines 87-470 contain the regulations which were adopted at that Assembly, divided into fifteen articles and the same number of points.<sup>1</sup> There is a very great resemblance, substantially, between these regulations and the charges contained in the later or second set of Manuscript Constitutions. But the regulations in the Halliwell poem are given at greater length, with more detail and generally with an explanation or reason for the law.

After an insertion referred to hereafter, the poem proceeds under the title of "*Ars quatuor coronatorum*," *The Art or Skill of the Four Crowned Ones*, a title rarely applied to Masonry in the English manuscripts. We have first a prayer to God and the Virgin, and then the Legend of the Four Crowned Martyrs, which ends on line 534.

Now, this Legend of the Four Crowned Martyrs<sup>2</sup>—*die Heiligen Vier Gekrönten*—is found in the manuscripts peculiar to the German Steinmetzen or Stone Masons of the Middle Ages. Its introduction in this manuscript is an evidence of the common origin of the document, and, as Findel<sup>3</sup> says, "must be regarded as a most decided proof of the identity of the German and English Stone Masons, and of their having one common parentage. But Bro. Hughan holds that the Legend, so far from being of German origin, is mentioned in English documents hundreds of years before there is historical proof of it being accepted in Germany.

The details of this Legend close at the 534th line, and the poem then proceeds to give a small and imperfect portion of what is known in our later manuscripts as the *Legend of the Craft*.

It seems that all this part of the poem has been lifted from its proper place, and that in the original the lines from 535 to 576 formed a portion of the *Legend of the Craft*, as it must have been inserted in the beginning of the second manuscript. First, because in all other manuscripts the Legend precedes the charges; second, because it has no proper connection with the Legend of the Four Crowned Martyrs which is before it, and which

<sup>1</sup> The articles were the older collection of statutes or rules from which the newer points or regulations were made into laws at the Assembly.

<sup>2</sup> See the full details of this Legend in the Mackey-Hughan-Hawkins "Encyclopædia of Freemasonry," article *Four Crowned Martyrs*.

<sup>3</sup> "History of Freemasonry," Lyon's translation, p. 31.



ends on the 354th line; and lastly, because it is evidently an interruption of the religious instructions which are taken up on line 577, and which naturally follow line 534. The writer having praised the Christian faith and piety of the four martyrs whose feast he tells us is on the eighth day after Allhalloween, proceeds on line 576 to warn his readers to avoid pride and selfishness and to practice virtue. There is here a regular and natural connection, which, however, would be broken by the insertion between the two clauses of an imperfect portion of a legend which has reference to the very beginning of the history of Masonry. Hence it appears that all that part of the Legend which described the events connected with Noah's flood and the Tower of Babel is borrowed, and belongs to another manuscript and to another place.

Probably the copyist had two manuscripts before him, and he worked sometimes from one and sometimes from the other, apparently with but little judgment, or perhaps he copied the whole of one and then mixed it up with borrowed extracts from the other without regard to any unity of subjects.

The rest of the poem contains instructions as to behavior when in church, when in the company of one's superiors, and when present at the celebration of the mass. The whole ends with the now familiar Masonic formula, "Amen, so mote it be."<sup>1</sup>

Line 471 furnishes evidence that the poem was originally composed of two distinct works, written, in all probability, by two different persons, but in the copy which we now have, combined in one by the compiler or copyist. Bro. Woodford also is of the opinion that there are two distinct poems, although the fact had not attracted the attention of Halliwell. The former says that "it seems to be in truth two legends, and not only one." This is evident, from the fact that this second part is prefaced by the title, "*Alia ordinacio artis gemetriæ*," that is, "Another Constitution of the art of geometry." This title would indicate that what followed was a different *Ordinacio* or Constitution and taken from a different manuscript. Besides, line 471, which is the beginning of the other or second Constitution, does not fall into its proper place in following line 470, but is appropriately a continuation of line 74. To make this evi-

<sup>1</sup> "Amen, so may it be."



dent, we copy lines 70–74 from the poem, and follow them by lines 471–474, whence it will be seen that the latter lines are a natural continuation of the former.

- Line 70. He sende about ynto the londe  
 71. After alle the masonus of the crafte,  
 72. To come to hym ful evene stragfte  
 73. For to amende these defaultys alle  
 74. By good counsel gef it hyt mytgh falle.
471. They ordent ther a semble to be y-holde  
 472. Every yer, whersever they wolde  
 473. To amende the defautes, gef any where fonde  
 474. Amonge the craft withynne the londe.

The second manuscript seems to have been copied from line 471, as far as line 496. At that stage, the charges or regulations next in order having been given from the first manuscript, the copyist omitted them, as a needless repetition, but went on at once with the “ars quatuor coronatorum.” This ended at line 534. Then he went back to a preceding part of the second manuscript and copied the early account of Masonry from line 535 to 576. The bare reading of these lines will convince the reader that they are not in their proper place, and must have formed a part of the beginning of the second poem.

Line 577 appropriately follows line 534, when the borrowed section is left out, and then the copying is correctly made to the end of the poem. The first manuscript was apparently copied correctly, with the exception of the two insertions from the second MS.

There is a doubt whether the Legend of the Four Crowned Martyrs belonged to the first or to the second poem. If to the first, then we have the whole of that poem, and of the second only the borrowed parts. This is, however, a mere guess without positive proof. Yet it is very probable.

On the whole, the view to take of this manuscript is as follows:

1. There were two original manuscripts, out of which the copyist made a careless mixture.
2. The first MS. began with line 1 and went on to the end at line 794. But this is only a guess. It may have ended, or rather the copying ceased, at line 470.



3. If the judgment just advanced be correct, then from a second MS. the copyist made insertions, in the following way:

4. The beginning of the second MS. is lost. But from very near the start, which probably described the before-the-Flood tradition of Lamech, the copyist selected a portion which begins with line 535 and ends at line 576. He had previously inserted the lines from 471 to 496.

5. We have, then, the whole of the first manuscript, from the 1st line to the 794th, with the addition of two insertions from the second, consisting only of 68 lines, namely: from line 471 to 496, and from line 535 to 576.

6. The first manuscript is without any references to Masonry before the Flood, but begins with the foundation of Masonry in Egypt, as its title suggests. This want was partly supplied by the second insertion (535-596), beginning with the building of Babel. But it is likely from the words, "many years after," that there was a preceding part to this manuscript that has not been copied. The "many years after" probably refer to some details that had been previously given. The account of the Seven Sciences, found in all later manuscripts, is not in the first poem only as inserted in this from the second.

7. So of the poem in the form we now have it, the parts copied from the second MS. consist only of 68 lines, which have been inserted in two places into the first MS.—namely, lines 471-496, and lines 535-576; and these have been borrowed from their proper places. All the rest of the poem forms the original first manuscript. If we hesitate in coming to the conclusion that the first and last parts of the poem were composed by the same author, it is because the latter part is written in a slightly different metre. This, therefore, leaves the question of where the first poem ends and where the second begins, still open to discussion.

The variations which exist between the Halliwell poem or poems, and other Masonic manuscripts of later date, are very important. They indicate a difference of origin, and, by the points of difference, suggest several questions as to the early progress of Masonry in England.

1. The form of the Halliwell MS. differs entirely from that of the others. The latter are in prose, while the former is in



verse. The language, too, of the Halliwell MS. is far more ancient than that of the other manuscripts, showing that it was written in an earlier stage of the English tongue. It belongs to the Early English which succeeded the Anglo-Saxon. The other manuscripts were written at a later period of the language.

2. The Halliwell MS. is evidently a Roman Catholic production, and was written when the religion of Rome prevailed in England. The later manuscripts are Protestant in their character, and many must have been written after the middle of the 16th century, at least, when Protestantism was introduced into that country by Edward VI. and by Queen Elizabeth.<sup>1</sup>

The different religious character of the two sets of manuscripts is very clear. We see church influence very strongly shown in the Halliwell MS. So marked is this that Mr. Halliwell supposes that it was written by a priest, which, we think, is not impossible, although not for the reason he gives, which is founded on his incorrect translation of a single word.<sup>2</sup>

But the Roman Catholic character of the poem is proven by lines 593-692, which are occupied in directions how the mass is to be heard. So ample are these directions as to the ritual observance of this part of the Roman Catholic worship, that it is very probable they were written by a priest.

In the later manuscripts we find no such allusions. Freemasonry, when these documents were written, was Christian

<sup>1</sup> Edward VI. reigned from 1537-1553; Elizabeth reigned from 1558-1603; the interval was occupied by the Roman Catholic reign of Mary. But the older style of the Halliwell MS. forbids any theory of its having been written during the latter period.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Halliwell, in support of his assertion that the writer of the poem was a priest, quotes line 629: "And, when the Gospel *me* rede schal"—where he evidently supposes that *me* was used instead of *I*, and that the line was to be translated—"when I shall read the Gospel." But in none of the old manuscripts is the flagrant blunder committed of using the accusative *me* in place of the nominative *Y* or *I*. The fact is, that the Anglo-Saxon *man*, signifying *one*, or *they*, like the French *on* in "on dit," as "man dyde," *one* or *they* did, or *it was done*, gave way in Early English to *me*, used in the same sense. Examples of this may be found in the writers who lived about the time of the composition of the Halliwell MS. In the *Ayenbite of Inwyrt* is the following line: "Ine the ydele wordes *me* zeneyeth ine vif maneres," that is, "In the idle word *one* sinneth in five ways." Again, in Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle are these phrases: "By this tale *me* may yse," i.e.: "By this tale *may be seen*," Story of Lear, line 183. "And best *me* may to hem truste," i.e.: "And they *may be trusted* best," ib., l. 184. "The stude that he was at yslawe *me* cleputh yet Morgan," i.e.: "The place where he was slain *is called* Morgan still," ib., l. 213. And the line in the Halliwell poem, which Mr. Halliwell supposed to mean, "And when *I* shall read the Gospel," properly translated, is, "And when the Gospel *shall be read*." It furnishes, therefore, no proof that the writer was a priest.



in its character, but it was Protestant Christianity. The invocation with which each one begins is to the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but no mention is made, as in the Halliwell MS., of the Virgin and the saints. The only reference to the Church is in the first charge, which is, "that you shall be a true man to God and the holy Church, and that you use no heresy nor error by your understanding or teaching of discreet men"—a charge that would be most fitting for a Protestant Christian brotherhood.

On referring to the first charge adopted after the revival in 1717 by the Grand Lodge of England, we find that then, for the first time, the reference to Church was left out, and claims urged for a universal religion.

Thus it is said in that charge: "Though in ancient times Masons were charged in every country to be of the religion of that country or nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves."<sup>1</sup>

Now, comparing the religious views expressed in the oldest Masonic Constitution of the 14th century, with those set forth in the later ones of the 16th and 17th, and again with those laid down in the charge of 1717, we find an exact record of the changes which from time to time took place in the religious aspect of Freemasonry in England and in some other countries.

At first it was Roman Catholic in its character, and under control of that church.

Then, after the Reformation, rejecting the doctrines of Rome and the influence of the priesthood, it held the Christian character, but became Protestant in its peculiar views.

Lastly, at the time of the so-called Revival, in the beginning of the 18th century, when Speculative Masonry received that form which it has ever since held, it put aside religious differences, and adopted a liberal and tolerant rule, which required of its members, as a religious test, only a belief in God.

<sup>1</sup> Anderson's "Constitutions," 1st edition, 1723, p. 50.



## CHAPTER SIX

### THE ORIGIN OF THE HALLIWELL POEM



ALL these facts concerning the gradual changes in the religious character of the institution, which by putting together the old manuscripts we are enabled to derive from the *Legend of the Craft*, are supported by historical documents, as will be seen, and thus the "Legend," notwithstanding the many defects and errors as to dates which deface it, becomes really valuable as an authority.

But this is not all. In comparing the Halliwell poem with the later manuscripts, we find unmistakable evidence that they have a different origin. Let us see what we can learn about that origin.

The Halliwell poem comes to us from a like source to that of the Stonemasons of Germany. It is not an exact copy of any German document, but its author must have been greatly impressed with the same peculiar thoughts and principles of the "Steinmetzen" of the Middle Ages. That these had a common root is most likely. But this is far from claiming that the Halliwell poem was first of all German. At most the facts point to the same sort of an origin with the additional confidence that the English product was by far the earliest in appearance.

The proof of this is plain to any one who will carefully read the Halliwell poem, and compare its idea of the rise and progress of Geometry with that exhibited in the later manuscript Constitutions.

These latter trace the science, as it is always called, from Lamech to Nimrod, who "found" or invented the Craft of Masonry at the building of the Tower of Babel, and then to Euclid, who established it in Egypt, whence it was brought by the Israelites into Judea, and there again established by David and Solomon, at the building of the Temple. Thence, by a curious



disregard of dates and times it was brought by one Namus Grecus, who had been a workman at the Temple, and who organized the Science in France under the auspices of Charles Martel. From France it went to England in the time of St. Alban. After a long halt because of the Danish and Saxon wars, it finally took root at York, where Prince Edwin called an Assembly, and gave the Masons their charges under the authority of a Charter granted by King Athelstan.

It will be observed that in this later Legend the Masonry of England is supposed to have been derived from France, and due honor is paid to Charles Martel as the founder of the Order in that kingdom.

Hence we may rationally conclude that the *Legend of the Craft* was modified by the influence of the French Masons, who, as history informs us, were brought over into England at an early period. In this respect, authentic history and the Legend coincide, and the one corroborates the other.

The variations of the Halliwell poem from later manuscripts are as follows: It omits all reference to Lamech and his sons, but passing rapidly over the events at the Tower of Babel, the building of which it ascribes to Nebuchadnezzar, it begins (if we except a few lines inserted in the middle of the poem) with the Legend of Euclid and the establishment of Masonry by him in Egypt.

There is no mention of King Solomon's Temple, whereas the history of the building of that edifice, as a Masonic labor, is an important part of all the later manuscripts.

The Legend of the Four Crowned Martyrs, concerning whom the later manuscripts are silent, is given at some length, and they are described as "gode masonus as on erthe schul go." These were the patron saints of the German Operative Masons of the Middle Ages, but there is no evidence that they were adopted in recent years as such by the English brotherhood, Solomon in England and the two Saints John in America being now selected as the patrons of the Craft.

There is no allusion in the Halliwell poem to Charles Martel, and to the account of the introduction of Masonry into England from France, during his reign, which forms some part of all the later manuscripts.



Neither is there any notice of the Masonry in England during the time of St. Alban, but the poem credits its entrance into that country to King Athelstan.

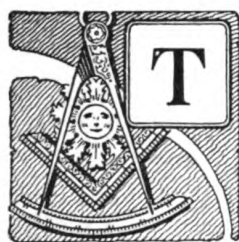
Lastly, while the later manuscripts record the calling of the Assembly at the city of York by Prince Edwin, the Halliwell makes no mention of York as the place where the Assembly was called, nor of Edwin as presiding over it. This fact destroys the theory of Dr. Oliver that the Halliwell poem is a copy of the so-called Old York Constitutions.

From all these considerations, I think that we are justified in assigning to the Halliwell poem and to the other later manuscripts two distinct influences, both centuries old, but the one much more ancient than the other. They agree, however, in a general resemblance, different only in the details. This suggests the idea of a common belief, upon which, as a foundation, two different structures have been built.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE LEGEND, THE GERM OF MASONIC HISTORY



THE *Legend of the Craft*, as it has been given in this work from the example in the Dowland MS., appears to have been accepted for centuries by the body of the Fraternity as a truthful history. Even at the present day, this Legend is exerting an influence in the formation of various parts of the ritual.

This influence has even been extended to the adoption of historical views of the rise and progress of the institution, which have, in reality, no other foundation than the statements contained in the Legend.

For these reasons, the *Legend of the Craft* is of great importance and value to the student of Masonic history, notwithstanding the conflicting periods, and unsupported theories in which it abounds.

Accepting it simply as a document which for so long a period claimed and received the fullest faith of the Fraternity whose history it professed to give—a faith not yet dead—it is worthy of our consideration whether we can not, by a careful examination of its general spirit and meaning, beyond the bare story it contains, discover some key to the true origin and character of that old and extensive brotherhood of which it is the earliest record.

We shall find in it the germ of many truths, and the understanding of several historic facts concerning which it makes important suggestions.

In the first place, it must be remarked that we have no way of determining the precise period when this Legend was first composed, nor when it was first accepted by the Craft as a history of the institution. The earliest written record that has been discovered among English Masons bears a date which is cer-



tainly not later than about the end of the 14th century. But this by no means proves that no earlier example ever existed, of which the Constitutions, which have so far been brought to light, may only be copies.

On the contrary, we have abundant reason to believe that all the Old Records which have been published are, with, say, the exception of the Halliwell MS., in fact derived from some original text which, however, has hitherto escaped the untiring search of students.

If, for instance, we take the Sloane MS., No. 3,848, the assumed date of which is A. D. 1646, and the Harleian MS., No. 2,054, the date of which is supposed to be A. D. 1660, and if we carefully compare the one with the other, we must come to the conclusion either that the latter was copied from the former, or that both were copied from some earlier record as the Cooke's MS. That from the shelves of the British Museum, or from the archives of some old Lodge, we may still confidently hope for further copies to appear from time to time and supply other and even earlier links in our chain of Masonic history.

The resemblances in language and ideas, and the similarity of arrangement that are found in both of the above documents, very clearly indicate a common origin, while the occasional errors with words can be safely credited to the carelessness of a clumsy copyist. Brother Hughan,<sup>1</sup> who is high authority, styles the Harleian, from its close resemblance, "an indifferent copy" of the Sloane. The Rev. A. F. A. Woodford,<sup>2</sup> who sets the earlier date of 1625 to the original Harleian, says it "is nearly a verbatim, word-for-word, copy of Dowland's form, slightly later, and must have been transcribed either from an early, and almost contemporary, nearly of even date, copy of Dowland's, or it is really a copy of Dowland's itself." These opinions by experts strengthen the view that there was a common origin for all of these manuscripts.

If we continue to compare the manuscripts of later date, as far, even, as the Papworth, which is supposed to have been copied about the year 1720, the same family likeness will be found in all. It is true, that in the writing of the later manuscripts—those,

<sup>1</sup> "Old Charges of the British Freemasons," p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to Hughan's "Old Charges," p. xi.



for example, that were copied toward the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries—the language has been improved, some few out-of-date terms have been avoided, and more recent words used instead of them. Names taken from the Bible have been sometimes used with a greater respect for correct spelling, and a feeble attempt has been made to give a modern appearance to the document. But in all of them there is the same misspelling of words, the same disregard for the rules of grammar, the same arrangement of the story, and a preservation and repetition of all the statements, false and trustworthy, which are to be found in the earliest examples.

We have said that the *Legend of the Craft*, as set forth in the later manuscripts, was for centuries accepted by the Operative Masons of England, with all its mixture of the order of events, as a true history of the rise and progress of Masonry from the earliest times, and that the influence of this belief is still felt among the Speculative Masons of the present day, and that it has impressed the modern rituals with its views.

That fact gives to this Legend an importance and a value beyond its character as a mere Legend. And its value will be greatly increased if we are able to show that, notwithstanding the myths with which it abounds, the *Legend of the Craft* really contains the germ of historical truth. It is, indeed, a historical myth—one of that species of myths so common to be found in the study of ancient beliefs, which has a foundation in historical truth, with the admixture of a certain amount of fiction in the use of personages and circumstances, that are not historical, or are not historically treated. Indeed, it may be considered as almost rising into the higher class of historical myths, in which the historical and truthful rule over whatever there may be of fiction.<sup>1</sup>

In looking at the Legend of the Mediæval Masons from this point of view, it would be well if we should govern ourselves by the weighty thought of Max Müller,<sup>2</sup> who says, in writing on a related subject, that “everything is true, natural, significant, if we enter with a reverent spirit into the meaning of ancient

<sup>1</sup> For a division of myths into classes showing the historical myth and the mythical history, see Mackey's “Symbolism of Freemasonry.”

<sup>2</sup> “Science of Language,” 2d series, p. 578.



art and ancient language. Everything becomes false, miraculous, and unmeaning, if we interpret the deep and mighty words of the seers of old in the shallow and feeble sense of modern chroniclers."

Examined in the light of this sentiment, which teaches us to look upon the language of the myth, or Legend, as containing a deeper meaning than that which is shown upon its face, we shall find in the *Legend of the Craft* many points of historical reference, and, where not historical, then symbolical, which will free it of much of what has been called its absurdities.

It is to an examination of the Legend in this thoughtful spirit that we now invite the reader. Let it be understood that we direct our attention to the Legend contained in the later manuscripts, such as the Dowland, Harleian, Sloane, etc., of which a copy has been given on other pages of this work, and that reference is made only as occasion may require the Halliwell MS. to compare or explain. This is done because the Legend of the later manuscripts is undoubtedly the one which was adopted by the English Masons, while that of the Halliwell MS. appears to have been of separate growth, which never took any extensive root as a whole in the soil of English Masonry.

In the further chapters devoted to this subject, which may be viewed as critical comments, Commentaries discussing the *Legend of the Craft*, we will consider the meaning of the various other Legends into which it is divided.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE ORIGIN OF GEOMETRY



THE manuscript begins with a prayer to the Trinity. This prayer is nearly the same as that which begins the Harleian, the Sloane, the Lansdowne, and, indeed, all the other manuscripts, except the Halliwell and the Cooke. From this fact we may justly infer that there was a common parent, an "editio princeps," whence each of these manuscripts was copied. The very slight changes in words, such as "Father of Kings" in the Dowland, which is "Father of Heaven" in the others, will not affect this conclusion, for they may be fairly credited to careless copyists. The reference to the Trinity in all these prayers is also a clear proof of the Christian character of the building corporations of the Middle Ages—a proof that is supported by historical evidence. In the German Constitutions of the Stonemasons, the invocation is "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the name of the blessed Virgin Mary, and also in honor of the Four Crowned Martyrs"—a prayer that shows the Roman Catholic spirit of the German statutes; while the lack of all reference to the Virgin and the Martyrs gives a Protestant character to the English manuscripts.

Next follow remarks on the seven liberal arts and sciences, the nature and intention of each being briefly described. In all the manuscripts, even the earliest—the Halliwell—we find the same reference to them, and, almost word for word, the same description. It is not surprising that these sciences should have as large a place in the Old Constitutions, as making the very foundation of Masonry, when we reflect that an equal position was given to them in the Middle Ages as possessing the whole body of human knowledge. Thus Mosheim<sup>1</sup> tells us that in the 11th

<sup>1</sup> "Ecclesiastical History of the Eleventh Century," part ii, chap. i.



century they were taught in the greatest part of the schools; and Holinshed, who wrote in the 16th century, says that they were a part of the course of study that was taught in the universities. Speculative Masonry continues to this day to pay respect to these seven sciences, and has adopted them among its important symbols in the second degree. The connection sought to be established in the old manuscripts between them and Masonry, would seem to show the existence of a praiseworthy desire among the Operative Masons of the Middle Ages to raise the character of their Craft above the ordinary standard of workmen—an elevation that history informs us was actually effected, the Freemasons of the Gild holding themselves and being held by others as of higher rank and greater acquirements than were the rough Masons who did not belong to the society of builders.

The manuscript continues by saying that Geometry and Masonry are identical. Thus, in naming and defining the seven liberal arts and sciences, Geometry is placed as the fifth, "the which science," says the Legend, "is called Masonrye."<sup>1</sup>

Now, this claim that Geometry and Masonry are the same sciences, has been held from the time of the earliest records to the present day by all the Operative Masons who came before the 18th century, as well as by the Speculative Masons after that period.

In the ritual of the Fellow Craft's degree used ever since, at least from the middle of the last century, the candidate is told that "Masonry and Geometry are synonymous terms, that they mean the same." The Lodgeroom, wherever Speculative Masonry has spread, shows, by the place of the shining letter in the East, that the belief is still held.

Gadicke, the author of a German *Lexicon of Freemasonry*, says, that as Geometry is among the mathematical sciences the one which has the most especial reference to architecture, we can, therefore, under the name of Geometry, understand the whole art of Freemasonry.

Hutchinson, speaking of the letter G, says that it denotes Geometry, and declares that as a symbol it has always been used

<sup>1</sup> Dowland MS. The Halliwell poem puts the same idea in different words:

"At these lordys prayers they counterfetyd gemetry,

And gaf hyt the name of Masonry." (Lines 23, 24.)



by artificers—that is, architects and master-builders, those who designed and contrived—and by Freemasons.<sup>1</sup>

The modern ritual maintains this legendary idea of the close connection that exists between Geometry and Masonry, and tells us that the former is the basis on which the latter, as a super-structure or building, is erected. Thus we find that Masonry has adopted mathematical figures, such as angles, squares, triangles, circles, and especially the 47th proposition of Euclid, as leading symbols.

And this idea of putting Geometry into Masonry as a main element—the idea that is suggested in the Legend—was so thoroughly accepted, that in the 18th century a Speculative Mason was known as a “Geometrical Mason.”

We have found this idea of Geometry, as the foundation science of Masonry, set forth in the *Legend of the Craft*. It will be well to see how it grew in the Middle Ages, in the accredited history of the Craft. Thus we shall have discovered another link in the chain which unites the myths of the Legend with the true history of the institution.

The Operative Masons of the Middle Ages, who are said to have derived the knowledge of their art as well as their organization as a Gild of Builders from the Architects of Lombardy, who were the first to assume the title of “Freemasons,” were in the possession of secrets which enabled them everywhere to construct the buildings on which they were engaged according to the same principles, and to keep up, even in the most distant countries, a correspondence, so that every member was made acquainted with even the very smallest improvement in the art which had been discovered by any other.<sup>2</sup> One of these secrets was the knowledge of the science of symbolism,<sup>3</sup> and the other was to know how to apply the principles of Geometry to the art of building.

“It is certain,” says Paley,<sup>4</sup> “that Geometry lent its aid in the planning and designing of buildings”; and he adds

<sup>1</sup> “Spirit of Freemasonry,” lect. viii, p. 92, 2d edition.

<sup>2</sup> Hope, “Historical Essay on Architecture.”

<sup>3</sup> M. Maury (“Essai sur les Legendes Pieures du Moyen-Age”) gives many instances of the application of symbolism by these builders to the construction of churches.

<sup>4</sup> “Manual of Gothic Architecture,” p. 78.



that "probably the equilateral triangle was the basis of most formations."

The symbols of Geometry found in the ritual of modern Freemasonry may be considered as the remains of the geometrical secrets of the Freemasons of the Middle Ages, which are now admitted to be lost.<sup>1</sup> As these founded their operative art on the knowledge of Geometry, and as the secrets of which they boasted as distinguishing them from the "rough Masons" of the same period consisted in the applying of the principles of that science to the erection of buildings, it is not surprising that in their traditional history they should have so joined architecture with Geometry, and that with their own art of building, as to speak of Geometry and Masonry as being the same, or as synonymous terms, to use a familiar expression.

"The fifth science," says the Dowland MS., is "called Geometry, . . . the which science is called Masonrye." Remembering the tendency of all men to enlarge upon their own pursuits, it is not surprising that the Freemasons of the Middle Ages should have believed and said that "there is no handycraft that is wrought by man's hand but it is wrought by Geometry."

All this discussion in the old manuscripts on the likeness of Geometry and Masonry, gives to the *Legend of the Craft* a sentiment and a purpose, the existence of which is supported by the accredited evidence of the history of the period.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Lindsay, "Sketches of the History of Christian Art," ii, 14.



## CHAPTER NINE

### THE LEGEND OF LAMECH'S SONS AND THE PILLARS



THE traditional history of Masonry now begins, in the Legend of the Craft, with an account of the three sons of Lamech, to whom is credited the discovery of all sciences. But the most interesting part of the Legend is that in which the story is told of two pillars erected by these sons, and on which they had inscribed the discoveries they had made, so that after the threatened destruction of the world the knowledge which they had gained might be handed on to the human race after the Flood.

This story is not mentioned in the Bible, but is first related by Josephus in the following words:

"They also [the posterity of Seth] were the inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies and their order. And that their inventions might not be lost before they were sufficiently known, upon Adam's prediction that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and at another time by the violence and quantity of water, they made two pillars, the one of brick, the other of stone; they inscribed their discoveries on them both, that in case the pillar of brick should be destroyed by the Flood, the pillar of stone might remain and exhibit those discoveries to mankind, and also inform them that there was another pillar of brick erected by them. Now this remains in the land of Siriad to this day."<sup>1</sup>

Although this traditional report has received scarcely any respect from scholars, and Josephus has been accused either of "incredible audacity or frivolous credulity,"<sup>2</sup> still it has formed

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, "Antiquities of the Jews," B. I., chapter ii, Whiston's translation.

<sup>2</sup> "Incredibili audaciâ aut futili credulitate usus est," is the language of Hornius in his "*Geographia Vetus*." But Owen ("Theologomena," lib. iv, chapter ii, 6), although inclined to doubt the story, thinks it not impossible if we suppose hieroglyphics, picture-drawings like those of the Egyptians, to have been used for the inscriptions, instead of letters.



the foundation on which the Masonic Legend of the pillars has been erected. But in passing from the Jewish historian to the Legend-maker of the Craft, the form of the story has been altered in some degree. In Josephus the setting up of the pillars is credited to the descendants of Seth; in the Legend, to the children of Lamech. How did this important change arise?

The Dowland and later manuscripts cite the fourth chapter of Genesis as authority for the Legend. Genesis makes no mention of these pillars. But in the Cooke MS., which is of an earlier date to the Dowland MS., we can trace the true source of the Legend in its Masonic form, something which could not be done until that manuscript was published.

To the Cooke MS. has been accorded the date of 1450. It differs materially in form and substance from the Halliwell MS., which preceded it by a century, and is the first of the Old Constitutions in which anything like the present form of the Legend appears.

The way in which the Legend of Lamech is treated by it enables us to discover the true source whence this part of the Legend of the Craft was derived.

It must be remarked, in the first place, that the Halliwell poem, the earliest of the old manuscripts, the date of which is not later than the close of the 14th century, has no reference to this Legend of Lamech and his children. The Cooke MS. is the first one in which we find the details. The Cooke MS. is assigned, as has been before said, to the end of the 15th century, about the year 1450. In it the Legend of the pillars is given (from lines 253 to 284) in the following words:

"And these iii brothern [the sons of Lamech] aforesayd, had knowlyche that God wold take vengans for synne other by fyre or watir, and they had greter care how they myght do to saue the sciens that they founde, and they toke her [their] consell to gedyr [together] and by all her [their] witts they seyde that were ij manner of stonn of suche vertu that the one wolde neuer brenne [burn] and that stonn is called marbyll and that other stonn that woll not synke in watir, and that stone is namyd laterus,<sup>1</sup> and so they deuysyd [devised] to wryte all the sciens that they

<sup>1</sup> From the Latin "later," a brick.



had Found<sup>1</sup> in this ij stonys if that god wolde take vengeans by fyre that the marbyll scholde not brenne. And yf god sende vengeans by watir that the other scholde not droune, and so they prayed her elder brother jobell that wold make ij pillers of these ij stones, that is to sey of marbill and of laterus, and that he wolde write in the ij pylers alle the sciens and crafte that alle they had founde, and so he did."

Comparing this Legend with the passage that has been cited from Josephus, it is evident that the Legend-maker had not derived his story from the Jewish historian. The latter credits the building of the pillars to the children of Seth, while the former says it was done by the children of Lamech. How are we to explain this change in the form of the Legend? We can only solve the problem by referring to a work almost of the same time with the writer of the Legend.

Ranulph Higden, a Benedictine monk of St. Werburg's Abbey, in Chester, who died in the latter half of the 14th century, wrote a *Universal History*, completed to his own times, under the title of *Polychronicon*.

The *Polychronicon* was written in the Latin language, but was translated into English by Sir John Trevisa. This translation, with several changes in the wording, was published in London by William Caxton in 1482, about ten years before the date of the Cooke MS. With this work, the compiler of the Legend in the Cooke MS. appears to have been familiar. He often quotes it as an authority for his claims.

Thus he says: "Ye schal understonde that amonge all the craftys of the world of mannes crafte Masonry hath the most notabilite and moste parte of this sciens Gemetry as his notid and seyed in storiall as in the bybyll and in the master of stories. And in policronico a cronycle p'uyd."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is unfortunate that in many printed copies of the old manuscripts, the editors have substituted the double *ff* for the capital *F* which is in the original. The scribes or amanuenses of the Middle Ages were fond of employing capital letters when there was really no use for them, but they never indulged in the folly of unnecessarily doubling initial letters. What the modern editors of the manuscripts have mistaken for a double *ff* was really the *ff*, the capital *F* of the copyists. Bro. Hughan, in his edition of the "Old Charges," is, as we might expect, generally correct in this particular. But sometimes, probably by accident, he has printed the double instead of the capital letter.

<sup>2</sup> Bro. Matthew Cooke in editing this manuscript took the last word to mean "printed." Bro. Gould in his "History of Freemasonry," Volume 1, chapter ii, held the word to be "penned," because he read it as "p'nyd." Both Brothers G. W. Speth and W. J. Hughan in their comments prefer "proved"; they finding the spelling to be "p'uyd" and when given in full to be "preuyd."



Now the Legend of Lamech's children is thus given in Caxton's edition of the translation of Higden's *Polychronicon*:<sup>1</sup>

"Caym Adams fyrste sone begate Enoch, he gate Irad, he gate Manayell, he gate Matusale, he gate Lameth. This Lameth toke twey wyves, Ada and Sella, and gate tweyne sons on Ada. Iabell that was fader of them that woned in tentes and in pauylons. And Tuball that was fader of organystre and of harpers. And Lameth gate on Sella Tubal cayn that was a smith worchyng with hamer, and his sister Noema, she found fyrst weuyng crafte.

"*Josephus*. Jabell ordayned fyrste flockes of beestes and marks to know one from another. And departed kyddes from lambes and yonge from the olde. *Petrus* Tubalcayn founde fyrst smythes crafte. Tuball had grete lykyng to here the hamers sowne. And soo he vsed them moche in the accordé of melodye, but he was not finder of the instruments of musyke. For they were founde longe afterwarde."

The reader will at once see where the author of the Legend in the Cooke MS. got his information about the family of Lamech. And it will be equally plain that the later writers of the Old Constitutions took the general tone of their Legend from this manuscript.

The *Polychronicon*, after saying that music was discovered by Pythagoras, proceeds to comment upon the wickedness of mankind that followed the time of Seth, and repeats the Bible story of the intermarriage of the sons of God and the daughters of men, which he explains as meaning the sons of Seth and the daughters of Cain. Then comes the following passage:

"*Josephus*. That tyme men wyste as Adam and sayde, that they sholde be destroyed by fyre or elles by water. Therefore bookes that they hadde made by grete trauaille and studye, he closed them in two grete pylers made of marbill and of brent tyle. In a pyler of marbill for water and in a pyler of tyle for fyre. For it should be sauved by that manner to helpe of man-

<sup>1</sup> Book II, chapter v.

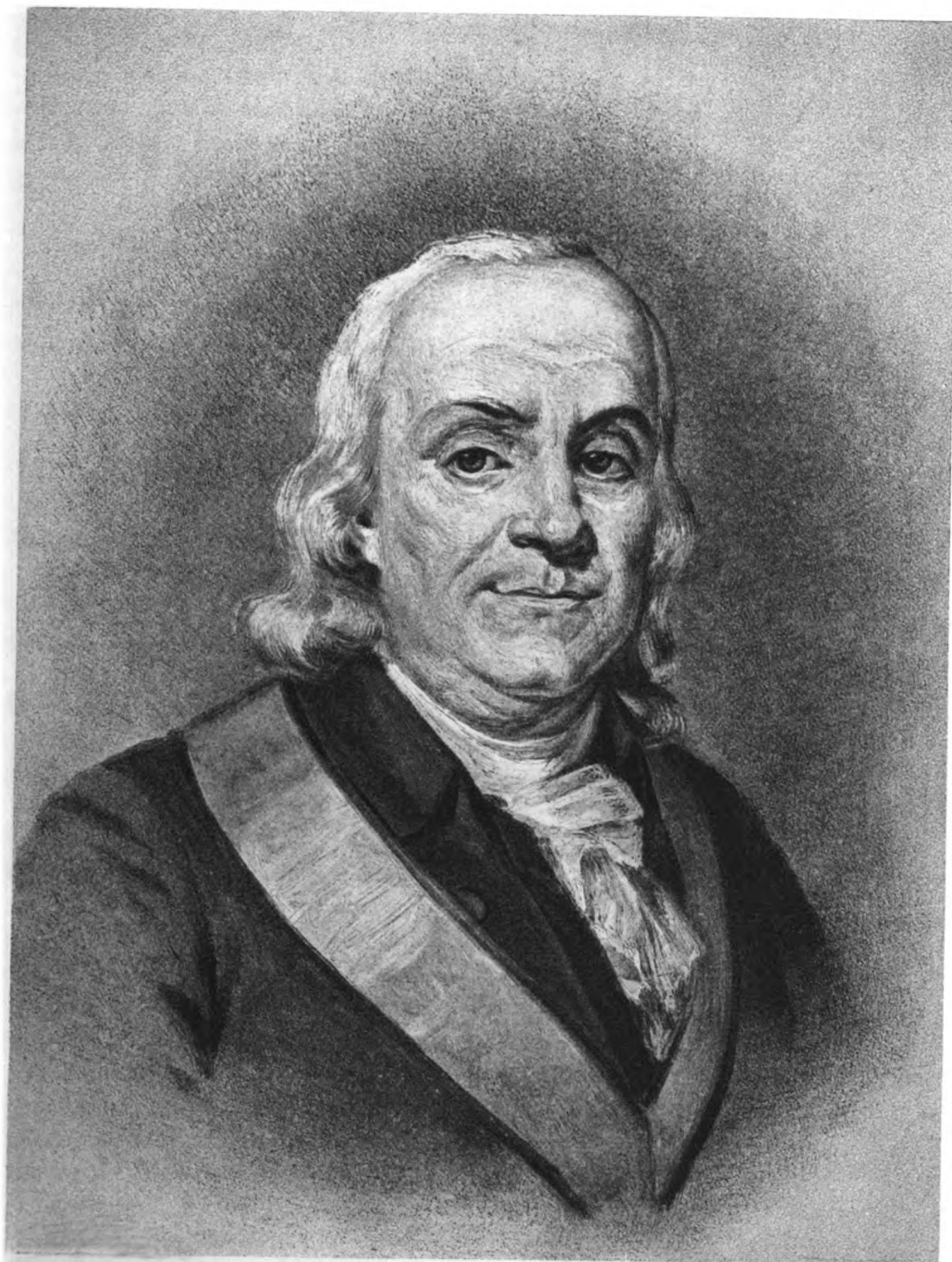


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kynde. Men sayth that the pyler of stone escaped the floode, and yet is in Syrya."

Here we find the origin of the story of the two pillars as told in the Legend of the Craft. But how can we account for the change of the builders of these pillars from the children of Seth, as stated in Josephus and from him in the *Polychronicon*, to the children of Lamech as it is given in the Legend?

By the phrase "That tyme men wyste," or "at that time men knew," with which Trevisa begins his translation of that part of Higden's work, he referred to the "tyme" of the same period with that of the children of Seth, of whom he had just been speaking. But the writer of the Legend engaged in telling his story of the invention of the sciences by the children of Lamech, and thus having his attention closely directed to the doings of that family, passed over carelessly or omitted to notice the item concerning the descendants of Seth, which had been inserted by the author of the *Polychronicon*, and his eye, catching the account of the pillars a little farther on, he applied the expression, "that tyme," not to the descendants of Seth, but to the children of Lamech, and thus gave the Masonic version of the Legend.

We may call this crediting of the pillars to the children of Lamech a "Masonic version," because it is now contained only in the Legend of the Craft, those who do not reject the story altogether as a myth, preferring the account given by Josephus.

But, in fact, the error of misunderstanding Josephus occurred long before the Legend of the Craft was written, and was done by one of the most learned men of his age.

St. Isidore, Bishop of Seville, who died in the year 636, was the author of many works in the Latin language on theology, philosophy, history, and philology. Among other books written by him was a *Chronicon*, or Chronicle, in which the following passage occurs, where he is treating of Lamech:

"In the year of the world 1642, Lamech being 190 years old, begat Noah, who, in the five hundredth year of his age, is commanded by the Divine oracle to build the Ark. In these times, as Josephus relates, those men knowing that they would be destroyed either by fire or water, inscribed their knowledge upon two columns made of brick and of stone, so that the memory of those things which they had wisely discovered might not



be lost. Of these columns the stone one is said to have escaped the Flood and to be still remaining in Syria."<sup>1</sup>

It is very evident that in some way the learned Bishop of Seville had misunderstood the passage of Josephus, and that to him the sons of Lamech are indebted for the honor of being considered the constructors of the pillars. The phrase "his temporibus," *in these times*, clearly refers to the times of Lamech.

It is doubtful whether the author of the Legend of the Craft was acquainted with the works of Isidore, or had read this passage. His *Etymologies* are repeatedly cited in the Cooke manuscript, but it is through Higden, whose *Polychronicon* contains many quotations from the *Libri Etymologiarum* of the Spanish Bishop and Saint. But we may fairly assume that the Legend-maker got his ideas from the *Polychronicon* in the method here described.

A new Legend has more recently been introduced into Masonry, in which the building of these pillars is said to be by Enoch. But this Legend, which is supposed to have been the invention of the Chevalier Ramsay, is altogether modern, and has no connection with the Legend of the Craft.

By borrowing the story of the pillars from Josephus, through the *Polychronicon*, though they have made some confusion in telling of the events, the Old Operative Masons were simply setting into their Legend of the Craft a myth which had been universal among the ancient nations, for all of them had their memorial columns. Sesostris, the great Egyptian king and conqueror, sometimes called Sethos, or Seth, and who, Whiston thinks, has been confounded by Josephus with the Adamic Seth, erected pillars as monuments of his victories in all the countries which he conquered.

The *Polychronicon*, with which we see that the old Freemasons were familiar, had told them that Zoroastres, King of Bactria, had written or engraved the seven liberal arts and sciences on fourteen pillars, seven of brass and seven of brick. Hercules was said to have placed at the Straits of Gades two pillars, to show to later peoples how far he had gone with his conquests.

In conclusion, it should be observed that the story of the pillars as inserted in the Legend of the Craft has exerted no influence on the modern rituals of Freemasonry, and is never referred

<sup>1</sup> "Opera Isidori," ed. Matriti, 1778, tome i, p. 125.



to in any of the ceremonies of Ancient Craft Masonry. The more recent Legend of the pillars of Enoch belongs entirely to the higher and more modern degrees. The only pillars mentioned in the foundation degrees are those of Solomon's temple. But these develop so important a part of the symbolism of the institution as to demand our further study.



## CHAPTER TEN

### THE LEGEND OF HERMES



THE next part of the Legend of the Craft which claims our attention is that which relates to Hermes, who is said to have found one of the pillars erected by the sons of Lamech, and to have given to mankind the sciences written on it. This story may, for distinction, be called "The Legend of Hermes."

The name Hermes has suffered cruel mangling from the hands of the copyists in the different manuscripts. In the Dowland MS. it is *Hermarynes*; in the Lansdowne, *Herminerus*; in the York, *Hermarines*; in the Sloane, 3,848, *Hermine*s and *Hermen*es, who "was afterwards called Hermes"; and worst and most ugly of all, it is in the Harleian, *Hermarmes*. But they all evidently refer to the celebrated Hermes Trismegistus, or the thrice great Hermes. The Cooke MS. from which the story in the later manuscripts is derived, spells the name correctly, and adds, on the authority of the *Polychronicon*, that while Hermes found one of the pillars, Pythagoras discovered the other. Pythagoras is not mentioned in any of the later manuscripts, and we first find him referred to as a founder in Masonry in the questionable manuscript of Leland, which fact will, perhaps, furnish another argument against the authority or standing of that document.

As to Hermes, the Legend is not altogether without some historical support, although the story is in the Legend mythical, but of that kind which belongs to the historical myth.

He was said to be the son of Taut or Thoth, whom the Egyptians made a god and placed his image beside those of Osiris and Isis. To him they credited the invention of letters, as well as of all the sciences, and they esteemed him as the founder of their religious rites.



Hodges says, in a note on a passage of Sanchoniathon,<sup>1</sup> the Phœnician historian, that "Thoth was an Egyptian deity of the second order. The Græco-Roman mythology identified him with Hermes or Mercury. He was reputed to be the inventor of writing, the patron deity of learning, the scribe of the gods, in which capacity he is represented signing the sentences on the souls of the dead." Some more recent writers have supposed that Hermes was the symbol of Divine Intelligence and the pattern for Plato's "Logos."

Manetho, the Egyptian priest and historian, who lived about three hundred years before Christ, as quoted by Syncellus, mentions three beings called Hermes by the Egyptians. The first, or Hermes Trismegistus, had, before the Flood, written on pillars, the history of all the sciences; the second, the son of Agathodemon, translated the precepts of the first; and the third, who is supposed to be also named Thoth, was the adviser of the god and goddess, Osiris and Isis. But the three were later confounded and fused into one, Hermes Trismegistus. He was always understood by the philosophers to symbolize or represent the birth, the progress, and the perfection of human sciences. He was thus considered as a type of the Supreme Being. Through him man was elevated and in touch with the gods.

The Egyptians credited him with writing 36,525 books on all kinds of knowledge.<sup>2</sup> But this harvest of authorship has been explained as meaning the whole scientific and religious information collected by the Egyptian priests and preserved in their temples.

Under the title of Hermetic books, several works falsely credited to Hermes, but written most probably by the Neo-Platonists,<sup>3</sup> are still extant, and were thought to be of great authority up to the 16th century.<sup>4</sup>

It was a tradition very generally accepted in former times that this Hermes engraved his knowledge of the sciences on tables

<sup>1</sup> Cory's "Ancient Fragments," edited by E. Richmond Hodges, Lond., 1876, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Jamblichus, citing Selencos, "de Mysteriis," segm. viii, c. 1.

<sup>3</sup> A school of thinkers at Alexandria, Egypt, in the third century after Christ. They had a curious mixture of Jewish and Christian idea with Greek philosophy and Eastern mysticism. "Neo-Platonism" means the new followers of Plato, the philosopher.

<sup>4</sup> See Rousse's Dictionnaire. The principal of these works is the "Pœmander," or of the Divine Power and Wisdom.



or pillars of stone, and this information was afterward copied into books.

Manetho credits to him the invention of *stylæ*, or pillars, on which were inscribed the principles of the sciences. And Jamblichus says that when Plato and Pythagoras had read the inscriptions on these columns they formed their philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

Hermes was, in fact, an Egyptian lawgiver and priest. Thirty-six books on philosophy and theology, and six on medicine, are said to have been written by him, but they are all lost, if they ever existed. The question, indeed, of his own existence has been regarded by modern scholars as extremely mythical. The Alchemists, however, adopted him as their patron. Hence Alchemy<sup>2</sup> is called the Hermetic science, and thus we get Hermetic Masonry and Hermetic Rites.

At the time of the first appearance of the Legend of the Craft, the opinion that Hermes was the inventor of all the sciences, and among them, of course, Geometry and Architecture, was everywhere accepted as true, even by the learned. It is not, therefore, strange that the old Masons, who must have been familiar with the Hermetic myth, received it as something worthy to be put into the early history of the Craft; nor that they should have adopted him, as they did Euclid, as one of the founders of the science of Freemasonry.

The idea must, however, have sprung up in the 15th century, as it is first mentioned in the Cooke MS.

The next important point that occurs in the Legend of the Craft is its reference to the Tower of Babel, and this will, therefore, be the subject of further study.

<sup>1</sup> Juxta antiquas Mercurii columnas, quas Plato quondam, et Pythagoras cum lectitassent, philosophiam constituerunt. Jamblichus, "de Mysteriis," segm. i, c. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Name given to early chemistry, to the search for means to change the base metals into gold, to finding a liquid that would produce eternal life, etc.



## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### THE TOWER OF BABEL



UNLIKE the legend of Hermes, the story of the Tower of Babel appears in the Halliwell poem, which shows that the Legend was the common property of the various writers of these old manuscripts. In the second of the two poems, which as we have seen are united in one manuscript, the legend of Babel, or Babylon, is thus given:<sup>1</sup>

“Ye mow here as y do rede,  
That many years after, for gret drede,  
That Noee’s flod was alle y-ronne,<sup>2</sup>  
The tower of Bebyloine was begonne,  
Also playne werk of lyme and ston,  
As any mon schulde toke uppon,  
Seven myle the heyghte shadweth the sonne.  
King Nabugodonosor let hyt make  
To gret strenthe for monus<sup>3</sup> sake  
Thaygh such a flod agayne schulde come,  
Over the werke hyt schulde not nome,<sup>4</sup>  
For they hadde so hye pride, with strange bost,  
Alle that werke therfore was y-lost;  
An angele smot hem so with dyveres speeche,  
That never won wyste what other schuld reche.”<sup>5</sup>

The statements of this Halliwell Legend are very limited, nor is it possible to say with any certainty whence the writer derived his details. From neither the Book of Genesis, nor Berosus,<sup>6</sup> nor Josephus could he have got the information which has given its

<sup>1</sup> Lines 535–550.

<sup>2</sup> Rain—Ang.-Sax. *rinan*, to rain—That Noah’s flood would still rain.

<sup>3</sup> Men’s sake.

<sup>4</sup> Get—should not get over the work—cover it.

<sup>5</sup> That one could never understand what another should say.

<sup>6</sup> Historian of the Chaldeans, an ancient people of Asia living near the Persian Gulf. He lived about 260 years before Christ.



peculiar form to the legend. The mistake of making Nebuchadnezzar, who lived about sixteen centuries after the event, the builder of the tower is worthy of notice. It would appear that the writer of the poem had a general acquaintance with the well-known tradition of Babel, and that in loosely giving an account of it, he confused the time and place of the erection and the supposed name of the builder. At all events, the subsequent Masonic legendists did not accept the Halliwell writer as authority, or, more probably, they did not know his poem. It did not have any influence over the later manuscripts.

The next time that the Babel legend appears is in the Cooke MS., written a century after the Halliwell. The legend, as there given, is in the following words:

"Hit is writen in the bibull Genesis, Cap. 1<sup>mo</sup>, wo [how] that Cam, Noe's sone, gate Nembrothe, and he wax a myghty man upon the erthe, and he wax a stronge man, like a Gyant, and he was a grete kyng, and the bygynyng of his kyngdom was [the] trew kyngdom of Babilon and Arach and Archad and Calan<sup>1</sup> and the lond of Sennare. And this same Cam<sup>2</sup> he gan the towre of babilon, and he taught to his werkemen the craft of mesurie,<sup>3</sup> and he had with him mony masonys mo than xl. thousand, and he louyd and chereshed them well, and hit is wryten in Policronicon and in the master of stories and in other stories mo, and this a part wytnes [the] bybull in the same x. chapter where he seyth that asure [Assur] was nye kynne to Nembrothe<sup>4</sup> gede [went] owt of the londe of Senare, and he bylded the City Nunyve and Plateas and other mo. Thus he seyeth, 'De terra illa et de Sennare egressus est Asure et edifiavit Nunyven et Plateas civitates et Cale et Iesu quoque inter Nunyven et hæc est Civitas Magna.'

"Reson wolde [requires] that we schold telle opunly how and in what manner that the charges of masoncraft was fyrst foundyd and ho gaf [who gave] fyrste the name to hit of masonri. And

<sup>1</sup> These are the names of cities.

<sup>2</sup> The word *Nembroth* had been first written in the manuscript, then erased, and the "Cam" (for Ham) inserted. But this change is itself incorrect and does not agree with the rest of the legend.

<sup>3</sup> Mesuri—measure. The author of the manuscript had previously claimed that *measure* and geometry were the same. So here "the craft of mesuri" means the craft of geometry, and geometry was always supposed to be the same as Freemasonry.

<sup>4</sup> Cam was first written, then erased and *Nembrothe* inserted.



ye schyll know well that hit [is] told and writen in Policronicon and in Methodus episcopus and Martyrus that Asur that was a worthy lord of Sennare, sende to Nembroth the kyng to sende hym masons and workemen of crafte that myght helpe hym to make his Cite that he was in wyll to make. And Nembroth sende hym xxx C. (3,000) of masons. And whan they scholde go and [he] sende hem forth he callyd hem by for hym [before him] and seyde to hem, ye must go to my cosyn Asure to helpe hym to bilde a cyte, but loke that ye be well governyd, and I shall give you a charge profitable for you and me. . . .

"And they receyved the charge of him that was here [their] maister and here lorde, and went forth to Asure and bilde the cite of Nunyve in the country of Plateas and other cites mo, that men call Cale and Iesen that is a gret cite bi twene Cale and Nunyve. And in this manner the craft of masonry was fyrst preferryd [brought to the front] and chargyd for a sciens."

We next meet with the Legend in the later manuscripts, in a form differing but little from that of the Cooke MS. The Dowland, an early manuscript Constitutions, and the date of which is probably about the year 1550, has already been printed in this work. But for the convenience of the reader, in comparing the three forms of the Legend, so much of it as refers to the Babel legend is here inserted. It is in these words, which, it may be remarked, are very closely followed by all the later manuscripts up to the beginning of the 18th century:

"At the makinge of the Tower of Babylon, there was Masonrye first made much of. And the Kinge of Babylon that height [was named] Nemrothe was a mason himselfe, and loved well the science as it is said with masters of histories. And when the City of Nynyve and other citties of the East should be made, Nemrothe the Kinge of Babylon sent thither three score masons at the rogation [a formal request] of the Kinge of Nyneve, his cosen. And when he sent them forth he gave them a charge in this manner. . . . And this was the first tyme that ever Masons had any charge of his science."

In comparing the three forms of the Babylonish legend, which have here been cited, namely, as given in the Halliwell, the Cooke, and the Dowland MSS., we shall readily detect that there was a gradual growth of the details until the legend



finally took the shape which for a long time was accepted by the Craft.

In the Halliwell poem the legend is very brief, and by its sudden end would impress the opinion upon the reader that **Masonry** had no part in the building of the Tower of Babel, the only effect of which was to produce a confusion of languages and the spreading out of mankind. It was only "many years after" that the "craft of geometry," or Masonry, was taught by Euclid. In fact, the whole tendency of the Halliwell legend is to trace the origin of Masonry to Euclid and the Egyptians. In his account of the Tower of Babel, the writer of the Halliwell poem seems to have been indebted only to the Scriptural narrative, although he has mixed up Nebuchadnezzar, the repairer of Babylon, with Nimrod, its founder.

But the writer of the Cooke MS. took his details of the legend from another source. Only a few years before the writing of this manuscript, Caxton had published, and thus placed in the hands of the English Freemasons, Trevisa's translation of Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon*, or Universal History. Of this book, rich in legend materials, the writer of the Cooke MS. readily availed himself. This he honestly acknowledges in several places. And although he quotes as other authorities Herodotus, Josephus, and Methodius, it is very evident that he knows nothing of these historians except from the quotations from them, made by the monk Higden, in the *Polychronicon*.

The English Freemasons were probably already acquainted with the legend in the imperfect form in which it is given in the Halliwell poem. But for the shape which it assumed from the time of the writing of the Cooke MS., and which was adopted in the Dowland and all the later manuscripts, the Craft were undoubtedly indebted to the *Polychronicon* of the Monk of Chester, through its translation by Trevisa and its publication by Caxton.

There are two other forms of the Babylonian legend, of later date, which must be read before we can thoroughly understand the growth of that legend.

In 1723 Anderson published, by authority of the Grand Lodge of England, the *Constitutions of the Free-Masons*. Dr. Anderson was, no doubt, in possession of, or had access to, many sources of information in the way of old manuscripts which have since



been lost, and with these, assisted in some measure by his own inventive genius, he has extended the brief Legend of the Craft to 34 quarto pages. But as this work was of an official character, and was written and published under the authority of the Grand Lodge, and freely distributed among the Lodges and Freemasons of the time, the form of the Legend adopted by him was accepted by the Fraternity for a very long period as trustworthy. The Andersonian legend of the Tower of Babel molded, therefore, the belief of the English Craft for at least the whole of the 18th century.

Before dealing with the Andersonian version of the legend, it will be necessary to refer to another copy of the Old Constitutions.

Dr. Krause, the author of a learned Masonic work, entitled *The Three Oldest Documents of the Brotherhood of Freemasons*,<sup>1</sup> published in that work in 1810 a German translation of a document which he calls the *York Constitutions*.

Of this document Krause gives the following account: He says that Bro. Schneider, of Altenberg, had a letter from Bro. Böttger, who stated that in the year 1799 he had seen at London a copy of the York Constitutions in a very old manuscript, consisting of 107 leaves in large folio, almost one-third of which he had been unable to read, because it was written in the early English language, and there he was forced to employ a learned Englishman to get at its meaning. Schneider made diligent inquiries after this manuscript, and at last received a certified Latin translation, made in 1806, from which, in 1808, he prepared a German copy.

This document Krause supposes to be a genuine copy of the Constitutions enacted at York in the year 926. The original manuscript has, however, never been found; it is not referred to in any of the records of the old Grand Lodge of York, and seems to have remained hidden until seen in 1799 by this Bro. Böttger while on a visit to London.

For these reasons, Findel thinks it a forged document. Bro. Woodford did not agree with this opinion, but having his doubts, thinks the matter should wait for further proofs of its truth. Bro. Hughan believes that the resemblance shows it to have been

<sup>1</sup> "Die drei ältesten Kunsturkunden der Freimaurerbrüderschaft," vol. iii, p. 5.



made up from Dr. Anderson's writings or his writings borrowed from that source. At all events it is not a document of the year 926, no original of it has been found, no reference to it has been traced to York, and it is not mentioned by Drake or any historian of that city.

When the reader compares the extracts here given from Anderson's *Constitutions* and the Krause MS., he will agree that either Anderson had seen the latter manuscript, or that the author of it was familiar with the work of Anderson. The similar ideas, the placing together of certain words, and the use of particular phrases, must lead to the conclusion that one of the two writers was acquainted with the work of the other. Which was the earlier document is not easily determined, nor is it important, since they were almost of the same time, and, therefore, they both show what was the form assumed by the legend in the early part of the 18th century.<sup>1</sup>

The Anderson version of the Babylon legend is as follows:<sup>2</sup>

"About 101 years after the Flood we find a vast number of 'em [the offspring of the sons of Noah], if not the whole race of Noah, in the vale of Shinar, employed in building a city and large tower, in order to make themselves a name and to prevent their dispersion. And tho' they carried on the work to a monstrous height, and by their vanity provoked God to confound their devices, by confounding their speech, which occasioned their dispersion; yet their skill in Masonry is not the less to be celebrated, having spent above 53 years in that prodigious work, and upon their dispersion carried the mighty knowledge with them into distant parts, where they found the good use of it in the settlement of their kingdoms, commonwealths, and dynasties. And tho' afterwards it was lost in most parts of the earth it was especially preserved in Shinar and Assyria, where Nimrod, the founder of that monarchy, after the dispersion built many splendid cities, as Erech, Accad, and Calneh in Shinar, from whence afterwards he went forth into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth, Caleh, and Rhesin.

<sup>1</sup> Mackey became convinced that this document was written after the first edition of Anderson's "Constitutions," and, perhaps, after the second.

<sup>2</sup> "Constitutions," 1st edition, p. 3.



"In these parts, upon the Tigris and the Euphrates, afterwards flourished many learned Priests and Mathematicians, known by the names of Chaldees and Magi, who preserved the good science, Geometry, as the kings and great men encouraged the Royal Art."

The Krause MS., or the reputed *York Constitutions*, gives the Babylonian legend as follows:<sup>1</sup>

"Two generations after Noah, his descendants, proud of their knowledge, built on a plain, in the land of Shinar, a great city and a high tower of lime, stones, and wood, in order that they might dwell together, under the laws which their ancestor, Noah, had made known, and that the names of Noah's descendants might be preserved for all time. This arrogance, however, did not please the Lord in heaven, the lover of humility, therefore he caused a confusion of their speech before the tower was finished, and scattered them in many uninhabited lands, whither they brought with them their laws and arts, and then founded kingdoms and principalities, as the Holy Books often testify. Nimrod, in particular, built a town of considerable size; but Noah's son, Shem, remained in Ur, in the land of the Chaldeans, and propagated a knowledge of all the arts and sciences abroad, and taught also Peleg, Serug, Nahor, Terah, and Abraham, the last of whom knew all the sciences, and had knowledge, and continued to instruct the sons of freeborn men, whence afterwards the numerous learned priests and mathematicians who have been known under the name of the wise Chaldeans."

We have now five different documents presenting three forms of the Legend of the Tower of Babel:

1. *The Halliwell poem*. This Legend briefly tells of events at the building of the tower and the later halt of the work by the confusion of tongues and the separation of the builders. Confusing the periods of time, Nebuchadnezzar is said to be the King over the builders. Not a word is said about the institution of Masonry at that time. In fact, the theory of the Halliwell MS. seems rather to be that Masonry was, "many years after," taught for the first time in Egypt by Euclid.

<sup>1</sup> Given in Hughan's "Old Charges of the British Freemasons," p. 80. But it is there an English version of the German which had been translated from a Latin rendering of the original old English! We have corrected a few errors in the translation from the "Old Charges" by a comparison with the German of Krause.



The form of the Legend was never accepted by the Operative Masons of the Gild, certainly not after the end of the 15th century.

2. *The Cooke and later manuscripts.* This form of the Legend puts the origin of Masonry at the time of the building of the tower. Nimrod is made the Grand Master and makes the first charge—that is, frames the first Constitution that the Freemasons ever had. Asshur, the son of Shem, is also represented as a great Mason, the builder of the city of Nineveh, and to whom Nimrod sent workmen to assist him. From Babylon, Masonry was carried next into Egypt.

This form of the Legend, first presented in the Cooke MS., and followed almost word for word in the Dowland and later manuscript Constitutions, seems to have been the general belief of the Fraternity until about the end of the 17th or the beginning of the 18th century.

3. *The Andersonian and the York Constitutions.* In these, the form of the Legend is greatly improved. The idea that Masonry was first given a leading place and proper laws at the Tower of Babel under the control of Nimrod is still preserved. But Asshur no longer appears as a builder of cities, assisted by “his cosen,” but is changed, and correctly too, into the kingdom of Assyria, where Nimrod himself built Nineveh and other cities. And the next appearance of Masonry is said to be, not in Egypt, as in earlier manuscripts, but where it was taught, after the builders separated, by the Magi in the land of the Chaldeans.

This form of the Legend prevailed during perhaps the whole of the 18th century. It became the belief of the Masons of that period that Masonry was instituted at the Tower of Babel by Nimrod and thence spread to the Chaldeans.

Thus, in Smith's *Use and Abuse of Freemasonry*,<sup>1</sup> published in 1783, it is said that after the Flood the Masons were first called Noachidæ,<sup>2</sup> and afterwards sages or wise men, Chaldeans, etc. And Northouck, who, in 1784, by order of the Grand Lodge, published an edition of the *Constitutions* far superior to that of Anderson, says<sup>3</sup> that Nimrod founded the empire of Babylon, and

<sup>1</sup> Smith, “Use and Abuse of Freemasonry,” p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Sons of Noah. This curious name of Noachidæ may be traced back to Dr. Anderson's *Book of Constitutions*, 1738. It was dropped from later editions but continued by Lawrence Dermott in his *Ahiman Reason*, the *Book of Constitutions* of his Grand Lodge.

<sup>3</sup> Smith, “Use and Abuse of Freemasonry,” p. 11.



that "under him flourished those learned mathematicians whose successors were styled *Magi*, or wise men."

But about the end of the eighteenth century, or, perhaps, a little later, this legendary account of the origin of Freemasonry began to be cast aside, and another one, in denial of the old manuscripts, was put in its place.

Freemasonry was no longer believed to have begun at the Tower of Babel; the Temple of Jerusalem was accepted as the place of its birth; and Solomon and not Nimrod was called the "first Grand Master."

Accepting this Legend, as we do the other legends of Masonry, which, in the language of Oliver,<sup>1</sup> "are entitled to consideration, though their authenticity may be denied and their aid rejected," we say that at the present day the Babylonish legend has assumed the following form:

Before the Flood there was a system of religious instruction which, from the resemblance of its legendary and symbolic character to that of Freemasonry, has been called by some authors "antediluvian Masonry." This system was preserved by Noah, and after the deluge was taught by him to his family and followers. Then it was lost at the time of the dispersion of mankind, and corrupted by the pagans in their Mysteries. But later on it was purified, and Freemasonry, as we now have it, was organized by the King of Israel at the time of the building of the temple.

This idea is well exemplified in the American ritual. While some of the ritual has become imperfect or even lost from the necessarily imperfect mouth-to-ear teaching, yet it is clear that the candidate is one who is travelling from the mental blindness of the profane<sup>2</sup> world into the brightness of Freemasonry where he expects to find the light and truth, the search for which is represented by his initiation. This symbolic journey is supposed to begin at the Tower of Babel, where, in the old ritualistic story, "language was confounded and Masonry lost," and to end at the Temple of Solomon, where "language was restored and Masonry found."

According to this latest form of the Legend, the Tower of Babel is cast down from the leading place which was given to it

<sup>1</sup> "Historical Landmarks," vol. i, lect. i, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Profane means "outside the temple" and is applied by Freemasons to those not initiated.



of old as the birth-place of Freemasonry, and becomes merely the symbol of the darkness and ignorance of the profane world as compared with the light and knowledge to be obtained from an initiation into the System of Speculative Freemasonry.

But the old Freemasons who framed the Legend of the Craft were conforming more than these modern ritualists to the truth of history when they gave to Babylon the glory of being the original source of the sciences. So far from its being a place of mental darkness, we learn from the cuneiform<sup>1</sup> inscriptions that the Ancient Babylonians and their copyists, the Assyrians, had a wonderful literature. From the ruins of Babylon, Nineveh, and other ancient cities of the plain of Shinar tablets of terra cotta have been dug up, inscribed with legends in cuneiform characters. The meaning of this once unknown alphabet and the use of the language has yielded to the genius and the labors of such scholars as Grotefend, Botta, Layard, and Rawlinson.

From the fragments found at Koyunjik, the modern Arabic name for the site of Nineveh, George Smith estimated that there were in the Royal Library at Nineveh over ten thousand inscribed tablets, including almost every subject in ancient literature, all of which literature was borrowed by the Assyrians from Babylonian sources.<sup>2</sup>

Speaking of this literature, Smith says that "at an early period in Babylonian history a great literary development took place, and numerous works were produced which embodied the prevailing myths, religion and science of that day. Written, many of them, in a noble style of poetry, and appealing to the strongest feelings of the people on one side, or registering the highest efforts of their science on the other, these texts became the standards for Babylonian literature, and later generations were content to copy these writings instead of making new works for themselves."

We see, therefore, that the Freemasons of the present day are wrong when they make Babel or Babylon the symbol of mental darkness, and that there the light of Masonry was for a time extinguished, to be relit only at the Temple of Solomon.

<sup>1</sup> Cuneiform, meaning wedge-shaped, and applied to peculiar shapes of the letters in the Assyrian alphabet.

<sup>2</sup> "Chaldean Account of Genesis," pp. 21-22.



And again, the Legend of the Craft defends its character, and correctly clothes a historical fact in symbolic language, when it shows Babylonia, which was undoubtedly the fountain of all Semitic<sup>1</sup> science and architecture, as also the birthplace of Operative Freemasonry.

<sup>1</sup> Including Assyrians, Arameans, Hebræo-Phœnicians, Arabs, and Abyssinians—the descendants of Shem or Sem.



## CHAPTER TWELVE

### THE LEGEND OF NIMROD



THE universal sentiment of the Freemasons of the present day is to confer upon Solomon, King of Israel, the honor of being their "first Grand Master." But the Legend of the Craft had long before, though there was a tradition of the temple in existence, given, at least by suggestion, that title to Nimrod, the King of Babylonia and Assyria. It had credited the first organization of a fraternity of craftsmen to him, in saying that he gave a charge to the workmen whom he sent to assist the King of Nineveh in building his cities. That is to say, he framed for them a Constitution, and, in the words of the Legend, "this was the first tyme that ever Masons had any charge of his science." It was the first time that the Craft were organized into a fraternity working under a Constitution or body of laws. As Nimrod was the autocratic maker of these laws, it necessarily resulted that their first legislator, creating laws with his unlimited and absolute governing power, was also their first Grand Master.

This view of the early history of Freemasonry, presented to us by the Legend of the Craft, which differs so much from the modern opinion, is worthy of at least a passing consideration although it is now almost out of use.

Who was this Nimrod, who held so exalted a position in the eyes of the old legendists, and why had they assigned to him a rank and power which modern Craftsmen have thought to belong more justly to the King of Israel?

The answers to these questions will be fitting comments on that part of the Legend of the Craft which contains the story of this old Assyrian monarch.

The respect for the character of Nimrod which has been freely held by the ancients as well as the moderns, obtains no



support from the brief account of him contained in the Book of Genesis.

Josephus shows him as a tyrant in his government of his people, vain of his great power, a despiser and hater of God, and urged by this feeling, the builder of a tower through which he would avenge himself on God for having destroyed the world at the Flood.

For this view of Nimrod, Josephus was probably indebted to the legends of the eastern writers, tales which clung around the famous name, just as in ancient times legends always did cluster around great and mighty men.

Thus in the ancient writings he was said to be of giant size, ten or twelve cubits<sup>1</sup> in height. He was credited with the invention of idol worship, and he is said to have returned to Chaldea after the destruction of the Tower of Babel, and to have persuaded the people there to become fire-worshippers. He built a large furnace and ordered that all who refused to worship fire should be cast into it. Among his victims were Abraham, or Abram, the patriarch, and his father Terah. The latter was consumed, but the former by a miracle came out unhurt. It is hardly necessary to say that such legends are altogether mythical and of no historical value.

The Scriptural account of Nimrod is a very brief and unsatisfactory one. It is merely that:

"Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Ashur and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city."<sup>2</sup>

Learned students of the Bible have differed over the translation of the 11th verse. The Septuagint, the Vulgate, Luther's and our own recognized version say—"Out of that land went forth Ashur, and builded Nineveh." Higden, in the *Polychronicon*, which as we have seen was the source of the Masonic legend,

<sup>1</sup> An ancient measure of length, represented by the length of the forearm from elbow to end of the middle finger.

<sup>2</sup> Genesis x, 8-12.



adopts the same reading. And the Cooke and the later manuscripts credit the building of Nineveh and the other cities of Assyria to Ashur, the son of Shem, and the kinsman of Nimrod, who assisted him with workmen. Such was the legend until the beginning of the 18th century.

But some of the most reliable scholars, such as Borhart, Le Clerc, Gesenius, and many others, insist that *Ashur* is not the name of a person, but of a country, and that the passage should be read thus: "Out of that land he (Nimrod) went forth to Assyria and builded Nineveh and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen, between Nineveh and Calah." This is the form of the legend that was adopted by Dr. Anderson and by the author of the Krause document, and after the publication of Anderson's work it took the place of the older form.

The Craft, in both forms of the legend, saw Nimrod as a great Freemason, nor has the abuse of Josephus and the vile legends of the orientalist had the slightest effect on their apparent esteem of that mighty king, the founder of nations and the builder of cities.

And now, in the latter part of the 19th century, comes a learned scholar,<sup>1</sup> well acquainted with the language of the ancient Babylonians and Assyrians, and with the involved cuneiform alphabet in which it is clothed, and visiting the remains of the ruined cities which Nimrod had built, finds the fragments of twelve tablets which contain the history of a Babylonian monarch to whom for the present he gave the name of Izdubar and whom he identified with Nimrod. If this claim be correct, and there is certainly strong internal evidence in favor of it, we have in these tablets a fairly straightforward story of the doings of the first king of Babylon, which places his character in a better light than that which had up to that time been received as the popular belief founded on the reports from Josephus and other eastern writers.

The Izdubar legends, as Smith has called the inscriptions on these tablets, represent Nimrod as a mighty leader, a man of great daring in war and in hunting, and who by his ability and

<sup>1</sup> The late George Smith, of the British Museum, the author of "Assyrian Discoveries," of the "Chaldean Account of Genesis," and many other writings in which he has given the learned result of his investigations of the cuneiform inscriptions.



valor had united many of the small kingdoms into which the whole of the valley of the Euphrates was at that time divided, and thus founded the first empire in Asia.<sup>1</sup> He was, in fact, the hero of the ancient Babylonians, and therefore it was only natural that they should honor the memory of him who as a great and good king had first given them that unity which secured their prosperity as a nation.<sup>2</sup>

If we now refer to the Legend of the Craft, we shall find that the old Masonic legendist, although of course he had never seen nor heard of the discoveries contained in the cuneiform inscriptions, had rejected the traditional estimate of Nimrod's character, as well as the supposed results of the destruction of the Tower of Babel, and had wisely selected Babylon as the first seat and Nimrod (whoever may have been meant by that name) as the founder of the sciences, and especially of architecture.

There is in this an agreement of the legendary account with the facts of history, not usual with legendists.

"We must give," says Canon Rawlinson,<sup>3</sup> "the Babylonians credit for a genius and a grandeur of conception rarely surpassed, which led them to employ the labor whereof they had the command, in works of so imposing a character. With only 'brick for stone,' and at first only 'slime for mortar,' they constructed edifices of so vast a size that they still remain, at the present day, among the most enormous ruins in the world, impressing the beholder at once with awe and admiration."

The Legend of the Craft continually confuses Masonry, Geometry, and Architecture, or rather uses them as names meaning the same thing and therefore to be used for each other. It is not surprising that the Legend selects Babylon as the birth-place, and Nimrod as the founder of what was called "the science." The use of his name in the Legend, may be credited, says the Rev. Bro. Woodford,<sup>4</sup> "to an old assumption that rulers were patrons of the building sodalities." One may rather imagine that the idea is to be traced to the fact that Nimrod was supposed to be a patron of architecture and the builder of a great

<sup>1</sup> Smith's "Chaldean Account of Genesis," p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> See above work, p. 294.

<sup>3</sup> Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," see under Babel.

<sup>4</sup> Kenning's "Encyclopædia," see under Nimrod.



number of cities. In the Middle Ages the Operative Freemasons were always ready to accept any noted architect or builder as a patron and member of the Craft. Thus the history of Freemasonry, compiled by Dr. Anderson out of the *Old Records*, is nothing but a history of architecture, and almost every king, prelate, or nobleman who had erected a palace, a church, or a castle, is called a distinguished Freemason and a patron of the institution.



## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE LEGEND OF EUCLID



HAVING settled the foundation of Freemasonry in Babylon, the Legend of the Craft next proceeds by a quick change to tell the history of its movement into Egypt. This Egyptian account, which in reference to the principal action in it has been called the "Legend of Euclid," is found in all the old manuscripts.

This Legend is the opening feature of the Halliwell poem, being in that document the beginning of the history of Masonry; it is told with very much detail in the Cooke MS., and is apparently copied from that into all the later manuscripts, where the important particulars are about the same, although we find a few things told in some which are left out in others.

Stripping from the story its out-of-date style, the Legend may be rewritten from the manuscripts thus:

Once upon a time, as the storytellers say, Abraham and his wife went to Egypt. Now Abraham was very learned in all the seven arts and sciences, and was accompanied by Euclid, who was his pupil, and to whom he had imparted his knowledge. At that time the lords or rich men of Egypt were sorely troubled, because having a very large number of sons, for whom they could find no business, they knew not how they could obtain for them a livelihood.

In this strait they held a council and made it generally known that if any one could suggest a remedy, he should lay his plans before them, when he should be suitably rewarded.

Upon this Euclid presented himself and offered to supply these sons with an honest means of living, by teaching them the science of Geometry, provided they should be placed by their fathers under his full control, so that he might have the power of ruling them according to the laws of the Craft.



The Egyptian nobles gladly agreed to this plan and granted Euclid all the power that he had asked, and secured the grant to him by a sealed warrant.

Euclid then instructed them in the practical part of Geometry, and taught them how to erect churches, castles, towers, and all other kinds of buildings in stone. He also gave them a code of laws for their government.

Thus did Euclid found in the land of Egypt the science which he named Geometry, but which has ever since been called Freemasonry.

While all the manuscripts agree in the principal particulars of this Legend, there are in some of them a few variations as to the minor details.

Thus the Halliwell poem makes no mention of Abraham, but credits the founding of Masonry to Euclid alone, and it will be remembered that the title of that poem is, "The Constitutions of the Art of Geometry according to Euclid."

The Cooke MS. is far more full in details than either the Halliwell poem or the manuscripts that followed it. It says that Abraham taught Geometry to the Egyptians, and that Euclid was his pupil. But a few lines after, quoting St. Isidore as its authority, it says that Euclid was one of the first founders of Geometry, and that in his time there was an overflow of the Nile, and he taught them to make dykes and walls to hold back the water, and measured the land by means of Geometry, and divided it among the inhabitants, so that every man could enclose his own property with ditches and walls. Because of this the land became fertile, and the people increased to such a degree, that there was difficulty in finding for all employment that would enable them to live. Whereupon the nobles gave the government of their children to Euclid, who taught them the art of Geometry, so called because he had with its aid measured the land,<sup>1</sup> when he built the walls and ditches to separate each one's possessions from his neighbor's.

Needless repetitions and confusion of details in the Cooke MS. show that the author had derived the information on which he constructed his Legend from various sources—partly from the authority of St. Isidore, as he is quoted in

<sup>1</sup> Geometry from the Greek *γη* (ge) *land* and *μετρον* (metron) *measure*.



Higden's *Polychronicon*, and partly from the tradition of the Craft.

We see that the later manuscripts have copied the details of the Legend as it is found in the Cooke MS., but with many items left out, so as to give it the form in which it was known to the Craft in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The Dowland MS., whose date is supposed to be about 1550, gives the story almost exactly as it is in the Halliwell poem, except that it adds Abraham and Sarah to the list of persons taking part, making it in this respect agree with the Cooke MS., and probably with the form of the original Legend.

This pattern is followed by other manuscripts, the Grand Lodge, No. 1 (1583); the York, No. 1 (1600); the Sloane (1646); the Lodge of Hope (1675-1680); the Alnwick (1701), and even the Papworth MS. as late as 1720.

The Lansdowne MS. (1600), and the Antiquity (1686), have the Legend in a very imperfect form, and either the writers did not copy or they purposely left out much of the Dowland MS., as they but slightly refer to Egypt and to Euclid, and not at all to Abraham.

The reputation for great learning which the legendists have given to Abraham, although the Bible dwells only on his religious faith, they found in Josephus, as well as in Isidore.

Josephus says that among the Egyptians he was esteemed as a very wise man, and that besides reforming their customs, he taught them arithmetic and astronomy.

Therefore it is evident that the Legend of the Craft owes much of its materials to the *Antiquities* of Josephus, and the *Etymologies* of St. Isidore, and the *Polychronicon* of Ranulph Higden—the first two at second hand, and in all probability through the quotations of those works which are made in the last named book.

The Krause MS., which is said to have been translated from the English into the Latin, and afterward into German, and published by Dr. Krause,<sup>1</sup> gives the Legend in an entirely different form.

While this document is generally classed as not genuine and with a date of not earlier than the second decade, or perhaps

<sup>1</sup> "Die drei ältesten Kunsturkunden," iii, 59-113.



toward the middle of the 18th century, yet, as an indication of the growth and the change of the Legend at that period, it will be worth while to compare its form with that in the older manuscripts, at least so far as relates to Egypt, which is in the following words:

"Abraham was skilled in all the sciences and continued to teach them to the sons of the freeborn, whence afterwards came the many learned priests and mathematicians who were known by the name of the Chaldean Magi. Afterwards, Abraham continued to propagate these sciences and arts when he came to Egypt, and found there, especially in Hermes, so apt a scholar, that the latter was at length called the Trismegistus of the sciences, for he was at the same time priest and natural philosopher in Egypt; and through him and a scholar of his the Egyptians received the first good laws and all the sciences in which Abraham had instructed him. Afterwards Euclid collected the principal sciences and called them Geometry. But the Greeks and Romans called them altogether Architecture.

"But in consequence of the confusion of languages, the laws and arts and sciences could not formerly be propagated until the people had learned to make comprehensible by signs that which they could not understand by words. Wherefore, Mizraim, the son of Cham, brought the custom of making himself understood by signs with him into Egypt, when he colonized a valley of the Nile. This art was afterwards extended into all distant lands, but only the signs that are given by the hands have remained in architecture; for the signs by figures are as yet known to but few.

"In Egypt the overflowings of the Nile afforded an opportunity to use the art of measurement, which had been introduced by Mizraim, and to build bridges and walls as a protection against the water. They used burnt stone and wood and earth for these purposes. Therefore when the heathen kings had become acquainted with this, they were compelled to prepare stone and lime and bricks and therewith to erect buildings, by which, through God's will, however, they became only the more experienced artists and were so celebrated that their art spread as far as Persia."

If the reader compares this Legend of the Krause manuscript with that which is given by Dr. Anderson in the first edition of



his *Constitutions*, he will be forced to admit that both documents are taken from the same source, or that one of them is an extract or an explanation in brief of the other. It is clear that the statement in Anderson is merely a general view of that more detailed account contained in the Krause Legend, or that it is extended from the story in the first edition of the *Constitutions*.

Should we assume that the Krause MS. was written before Anderson prepared his history, it could not have been long before that time, and must have been between the date of the Papworth MS., which contains the Legend in its earliest form, and 1723, when Anderson published his work. Within this period the Masons sought to change the old Legend of the Craft, so as to deprive it of its seeming contradictions, and to omit its confusion of periods so as to give it the appearance of a reliable history of events.

Instead, therefore, of having the date of 926, which has been given to it by Dr. Krause, his manuscript is, as Bro. Hughan thinks it, "a compilation of the early part of the eighteenth century." It is, however, important because it shows how the old Legend was improved and cleared of its mistakes.

Certainly it is a blundering mixture of historical periods to make Euclid the associate of Abraham, who lived more than two thousand years before him. Nor is it less absurd to suppose that Euclid invented Masonry in Egypt, whence it was carried to India, and practiced by King Solomon, since the great student of Geometry did not flourish until six centuries and a half after the building of the Temple.

If then we consider it as a historical narrative, the Legend of Euclid is a failure. Yet it has its value as unfolding symbols of certain historical facts.

We may clearly see that the leading points in this Legend are those on which the old believers of it most strongly insisted:

1. That Geometry is the groundwork of Masonry;
2. That Euclid was the most noted of all experts in Geometry; and,
3. That the secret method of teaching this as well as all the other sciences which was pursued by the priests of Egypt, was very like unto that which was used by the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages, in teaching their disciples the geometric and



architectural secrets, which were what they called the Mystery of the Craft.

The Legend, in fact, symbolizes the well-known fact, that in Egypt, in early times—when there is no historical objection to make Abraham of that period of time—there was a very close connection between the science of Geometry and the religious system of the Egyptians; that this religious system included also all scientific teaching; that this instruction was secret, and given only after an initiation,<sup>1</sup> and that in that way there was a striking likeness between the Egyptian system and that of the Freemasons of the Middle Ages. And this fact of a relation between the two, the latter sought to present in the form of a history, but really in the spirit of a symbolic picture.

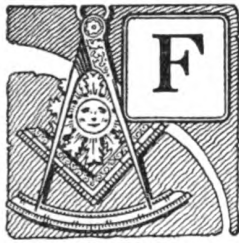
If we thus consider the Legend of the Craft, in its story of Euclid and his marvelous doings in the land of Egypt, it is stripped of its absurdity, and it is brought somewhat nearer to the limits of historical truth than the too matter-of-fact reader would be disposed to admit.

<sup>1</sup> Kendrick confirms this statement in his "Ancient Egypt," where he says: "When we read of foreigners (in Egypt) being obliged to submit to painful and tedious ceremonies of initiation, it was not that they might learn the secret meaning of the rites of Osiris, or Isis, but that they might partake of the knowledge of astronomy, physick, *geometry*, and theology."—(Vol. i, p. 383.)



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE LEGEND OF THE TEMPLE



FROM this account of the exploits of Abraham and his pupil Euclid, and of the invention of Geometry, or Freemasonry in Egypt, the Legend of the Craft proceeds, by a rapid stride, to the story of the introduction of the art into Judea, or as it is called in all of them, "the land of behest," or the land of promise.

Here it is said to have been principally used by King Solomon in the construction of the Temple at Jerusalem. The general details connected with the building of this edifice, and the help given to the King of Israel, by Hiram, King of Tyre, are told with sufficient historical accuracy, and were probably taken either directly or at second hand, through the *Polychronicon*, from the first Book of Kings, which, in fact, is referred to in all the manuscripts as a source of information.<sup>1</sup>

The belief that Freemasonry, as it now exists, was organized at the Temple of Solomon, although almost everywhere accepted by Freemasons who have not made the subject a historical study, but who get their ideas of the institution from the mythical teachings of the ritual, has been utterly cast aside by the greater part of the recent school of impartial students who search through the records and traditions of Freemasonry by the same methods which they would use in dealing fairly and freely with any other historical matter.

The fact, however, remains, that in the Legend of the Craft the Temple is directly and definitely referred to as a place where Masons met in great numbers, and where Masonry was con-

<sup>1</sup> "As it is said in the Bible, in the third book of Kings," are the words of the Cooke MS. In the arrangement of Scripture as then used, the two books of Samuel were called the first and second of Kings. The third book of Kings was then our first, according to the present practice.



firmed or established, and from where it traveled into other countries.<sup>1</sup>

If the Legend of the Craft be read as merely a record of the rise and progress of architecture in its connection with a peculiar architectural association, it was natural that in such a story some reference should be made to one of the most splendid specimens of the ancient building art that the world of old had exhibited. And since this Temple was, by its leading place in the ritual of Jewish worship, closely connected with both the Jewish and Christian religions, we shall be still less surprised that an association not only so religious, but even so allied with the Church as was the Freemasonry of the Middle Ages, should have treasured and loved this sacred building as one of the cradles of its institution.

Therefore we find the Temple of Jerusalem occupying a place in the Legend of the Craft which it has retained, with many additions, to the present day.

But there is a difference in the aspect in which this subject of the Temple is to be viewed, as we follow the progress of the Order in its change from an Operative to a Speculative Institution.

First referred to by the legendists as a purely historical fact, whose details were taken from Scripture, and connected by a sort of family relationship with the progress of their own association, it was retained during and after the growth of the Order into a Speculative character. This for the reason that it seemed to be the very best foundation on which the religious symbolism of that Order could be erected.

In spite of the fact that very many members of the institution, learned as well as unlearned, continue to accept the historical character of this part of the Legend, the Temple is chiefly to be considered from a symbolical point of view. It is in this aspect that we ought to regard it, and in so doing we shall free the Legend from another charge of absurdity. It is true that we are unable now to know how much of true history and how much of symbolism were thought out by the writers of the Legend, when they put the Temple of Jerusalem into that document

<sup>1</sup> "And thus was that worthy Science of Masonry confirmed in the country of Jerusalem, and in many other kingdoms."—*Dowland MS.*



as a part of their traditional story. But there is a doubt, and we must admit that we can not now positively assert that the Freemasons of the Middle Ages had not some impression of a symbolic idea when they put it into their history.

The Temple might, indeed, from its leading place in the ritual, be almost called the basic symbol of Speculative Freemasonry. The whole system of Masonic Symbolism is not only founded on the Temple of Jerusalem, but the Temple idea so thoroughly spreads within and around it that a sure connection is closely made, so that if the Temple symbol was wiped out entirely from the system of Freemasonry—if that system were purged of all the legends and myths that refer to the building of the Solomonic Temple, and to the events that are supposed to have then and there occurred—we should have nothing remaining by which to see and to know Speculative Freemasonry, as the successor of the Operative System of the Middle Ages. The history of the Roman Empire with no account of Julius Cæsar or of Pompey, or that of the French Revolution with no allusion to Louis XVI. or to Robespierre, would present just as disfigured a story as Freemasonry would, were all reference to the Temple of Solomon left out.

Knowing, then, the importance of this symbol, it is proper and it will be interesting to trace it back through the various specimens of the Legend of the Craft contained in the Old Constitutions, because it is to that Legend that modern Freemasonry owes the suggestion at least, if not the present arrangement and the terms in use for this important symbol.

In the oldest Constitution that we have, the one known as the Halliwell MS., whose date is supposed not to be later than the end of the 14th century, there is not the least mention of the Temple of Solomon, which is another reason why we may fairly give to that document an origin different from that of the other and later manuscripts.

The word *temple* occurs but once in the entire poem, and then it is used to refer to a Christian church or place of worship.<sup>1</sup> But

<sup>1</sup> "He made the bothe halle and eke bowre,  
And hye *tempuls* of gret honoure,  
To sport hym yn bothe day and nighth,  
And to worschepe hys God with all hys myght."  
(Lines 63–66.)



in the Cooke MS., written, as it is estimated, about a century afterward, there are ample references to the Solomonic Temple, and the statement made in the Legend of the Craft is for the first time set forth.

After this, there is not a Constitution written in which the same story is not repeated. There does not appear in any of them, from the Lansdowne MS. to the Papworth, any widening out of the tale or any growth of the occurrences. Each of them spreads out the story in many words and in almost the same words, upon the Temple of Solomon, as connected with Masonry, and gives thorough details of the construction of the edifice, of the number of Masons employed, how they were occupied in performing other works of Masonry, and, finally, how one of them left Jerusalem and took the art into other countries. We thus see that up to the end of the 17th century the Legend of the Craft in all its essential details continued to be accepted as traditionary history.

At the beginning of the 18th century the Legend began to show a nearer likeness to its present form. The document already referred to as the Krause MS., and which Dr. Krause too hastily supposed was a copy of the original *York Constitutions* of 926, is really a production of the early part of the 18th century. In this document the Legend is given in the following words:

“Although, by architecture great and excellent buildings had already been everywhere constructed, they all remained far behind the holy Temple, which the wise King Solomon caused to be erected in Jerusalem, to the honor of the true God, where he employed an uncommonly large number of workmen, as we find in the Holy Scriptures; and King Hiram of Tyre also added a number to them. Among these assistants who were sent was King Hiram’s most skillful architect, a widow’s son, whose name was Hiram Abif, and who afterwards made the most exquisite arrangements and furnished the most costly works, all of which are described in the Holy Scriptures. The whole of these workmen were, with King Solomon’s approval, divided into certain classes, and thus at this great building was first founded a worthy Society of Architects.”

Whether the author of the Krause MS. had copied from Anderson, or Anderson from him, or both have borrowed from some other document which is no longer to be found, is a ques-



tion that has already been discussed. But the description of the Temple and its connection with the history of Masonry, are given by Dr. Anderson with much of the features of the Krause form of the Legend, except that the details are more ample. Now, what was taught concerning the Temple by Anderson in his History contained in the first edition of the *Constitutions*, although afterward polished and perfected by Preston and other ritual makers, is about the same as that which is taught at the present day in all the Lodges.

Thus, notwithstanding that Dr. Krause claims,<sup>1</sup> that "the Temple of Solomon is no symbol, certainly not a prominent one of the English system," we are surely led to believe that it was one of the prominent symbols that is mentioned in this old Legend. It is further conclusive that the symbol of the Temple upon which so much of the symbolism of Modern Speculative Freemasonry depends, was, in fact, suggested to the revivalists of 1717, and later, by the story contained in the Legend of the Craft.

Whether the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages, who seem to have accepted this Legend as reliable and accredited history, had also, underlying the story, a symbolic explanation of the Temple and of certain incidents that are said to have occurred in the course of its erection, as referring to this life and the resurrection to a future one, or whether that meaning was in existence at the time when the Legend of the Craft was invented, and was later on lost sight of, only to be recovered in the beginning of the 18th century, are questions that will be more properly discussed in this work when the subject of the myths and symbols of Freemasonry is under consideration.

It is evident that between the story in the Legend concerning the Temple, with its three builders, the Kings of Israel and Tyre, and Solomon's Master of the Works, and the symbolism of Modern Speculative Freemasonry in reference to the same building and the same persons, there has been a close union.

Again, we find that the Legend of the Craft is of value in reference to the light which it throws on the progress of Masonic science and symbolism, which otherwise it would not possess, if it were to be received as a mere mythical tale without any bearing on history.

<sup>1</sup> "Die drei ältesten Kunsturkunden," vol. i, p. 155, note 41.



It will be necessary before we leave this matter to refer to the name of the chief builder of the Temple, and whose name has been subject to the variety and neglect in copying into all the manuscripts to which all proper names have been treated in those documents.

Of course, it is known, from the testimony of Scripture, that the real name and title of this person, as used in reference to King Solomon and himself, was *Hiram Abif*, that is, "his father Hiram."<sup>1</sup> This Hebrew title is found for the first time in Masonic documents in Anderson's *Constitutions*, and in the Krause MS., both being of the date of the early part of the 18th century. Previous to that period we find this person, variously called in all the Old Manuscripts, from the Dowland to the Alnwick, Aman, Amon, Aynone, Aynon, Anon, and Ajuon. Now, of what word are these a corruption?<sup>2</sup>

The Cooke MS. does not give any name, but only says, that "the King's son of Tyre was Solomon's Master Mason." All the other and succeeding manuscripts, without exception, admit this relation. Thus the Dowland, in which it is followed by all the others, says that King Hiram "had a son that was called AYNON, and he was a Master of Geometry, and was chief Master of all Solomon's Masons."

The idea was thus established that this man was of royal rank, the son of a King, and that he was also a ruler of the Craft.

Now, the Hebrew word *Adon* denotes a lord, a prince, a ruler or master. It is, in short, a title of dignity. In the Book of Kings we meet with Adoniram, who was one of the principal officers of King Solomon, and who, during the construction of the Temple, performed an important part as the chief or superintendent of the levy of thirty thousand laborers who worked on Mount Lebanon.

The old Freemasons may have mixed up this person with Hiram from the likeness of the syllables ending these names. The

<sup>1</sup> When the King of Tyre speaks of him, it is as *Hiram Abi*, that is, "My father Hiram," 2 Chron. ii, 13.

<sup>2</sup> The Papworth MS. throws out all these words and calls him *Benaim*, which is a misspelling of *Bonaim*, *builders*, and that a grammatical error for *Boneh*, the Builder. The writer of that manuscript had evidently got an idea of the new form which the Legend was beginning to show. Anderson, it will be remembered, speaks of the "Bonai, or builders in stone."



modern Continental Freemasons made the same error when they got up the Rite of Adonhiram or Adoniram, and gave to Hiram Abif the title of Adon Hiram, meaning the Lord or Master Hiram. If the old Freemasons did this, then it is evident that they cut short the full name and called him *Adon*.

We are more inclined to believe that the author of the first or original old manuscript, of which all the rest are copies, called the chief builder of Solomon *Adon*, Lord and Master, in allusion to his supposed princely rank and his high position as the chief builder or Master of the Works at the Temple.

However, the change from *Adon* to *Aynon*, or *Amon*, or even *Ajuon*, is not greater than what occurs in other names in these manuscripts, as where *Hermes* is altered into *Hermarines*, and *Euclid* to *Englet*. Indeed the copyists of these old documents appear to have had a great readiness for spoiling the spelling of all foreign names, very often almost totally destroying their resemblance.

For the real meaning of Hiram Abif, either as a historic or symbolic character, that topic will be thoroughly examined in another part of this work when the subject of Masonic Symbols comes to be considered. The topic of the corruption of the name in the old manuscripts, and its true signification, will again be treated when we look into the "Legend of Hiram Abif."

The Legend of the Temple could not be properly completed without a reference to Solomon, King of Israel, and some inquiry as to what he became indebted for the important place he has held in the Freemasonry of the Middle Ages.

The popularity of King Solomon among the eastern nations is a familiar fact, known not only to Oriental scholars, but even to those whose knowledge of the subject is confined to what they have learned from their youthful reading of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*. Among the Arabians and the Persians, the King of Israel was esteemed as a great magician, whose power over the genii and other supernatural beings was derived from his possession of the Omnific Name, the all-powerful word, by the use of which he did all his wonderful works, the said name being inscribed on his signet-ring.

Really it is not strange, seeing the travel which took place between the East and the West before and after the Crusades,



that the wise son of David should have enjoyed a great popularity among the poets and romancers of the Middle Ages.

It must be noted that the fame he enjoys among them is not that of a great magician, so much as that of a learned philosopher. Whenever a Norman romancer or a Provençal minstrel composed a religious morality, a pious declamation, or a popular proverb, it was the name of Solomon that was often selected to "point the moral or adorn the tale."

The eastern storytellers, whose tendencies were always toward the mystical, were unlike the writers of the Middle Ages who most probably got their opinion of the King of Israel from the account of him and of his writings in the Bible. Now, there he is peculiarly well known as a maker of proverbs.

Proverbs are the earliest outspoken thought of the people, and they lead, in every nation, all other forms of popular literature. It was therefore to be expected, that at the awakening of learning in the Middle Ages, the romancers would be attracted by the proverbial philosophy of King Solomon, rather than by his magical science, on which the eastern writers of fables had more fondly touched.

Legrand D'Aussy, in his valuable work, *On the Fables and Romances of the 12th and 13th Centuries*, gives two interesting specimens from old manuscripts, of the use made by their writers of the traditional fame of King Solomon.

First of these is a romance called "The Judgment of Solomon." It is something like the Jewish story of the two mothers. But here, the persons upon whom the judgment is to be passed are two sons of the Prince of Soissons. The claim made to the judge was for an award of some property left by the father. To find out who was better entitled to be considered the heir, by the respect he might show for the memory of his father, Solomon asked each to prove his skill as a horse-soldier by striking at a mark with his lance, and that mark was to be the body of his dead father. The elder son readily met the condition. The younger one indignantly refused. To the latter Solomon ordered the property to be given.

Now we see here how ready these romancers of the Middle Ages were to invent a story and fit it into the life of their favorite Solomon. The makers of the Masonic Legend of the Craft, who



were of the era of time, promptly followed their example. There is in that Legend, as we have seen, some errors in the fitting together of events, but none more absurd than that which makes the sons of a Prince of Soissons, who could not have been earlier than the time of Clovis in the 6th century, acquaintances of a Jewish monarch living at least sixteen centuries before Soissons was known as a kingdom.

However, it shows us the spirit of the age and how Legends were made. We are thus prepared to form a judgment of the Masonic myths.

The Middle Ages also credited to King Solomon a very familiar acquaintance with the science of astrology, that ancient study of the influence of the starry world upon the destinies of mankind. In so doing they by no means borrowed the Oriental idea that he was a great magician. The astrologer of the Middle Ages was deemed a man of learning, just as at this day is the astronomer. Astrology was, in fact, the astronomy of the Middle Ages. Solomon's astrological knowledge was therefore only a part of that great learning for which he had the reputation.

In the collection of unpublished *Fabliaux et Contes, Fables and Tales*, edited by M. Meon, is a poem entitled, "Le Lunaire que Salemon fist"; that is, "The Lunary which Solomon made."

The lunary or lunarium was a table made by astrologers to show the influence exerted by the moon on human affairs.

This poem, which consists of 910 lines, written in the old French or Norman language, contains directions for the conduct of life, telling what is to be done or left undone on every day of the month. The concluding lines give, without hesitation, the authorship of this teaching to Solomon, while it pays the following respect to his memory:

"Here is ended the lesson  
Made by the good King Solomon,  
To whom in his life God gave  
Riches and honor and learning,  
More than to any other born  
Or begotten of woman."

In the Bible the Book of Proverbs gave the writers of the Middle Ages occasion to have a high opinion of Solomon as a maker of



those pithy sayings — a feature of his genius which the Orientals seem to have overlooked.

Among the most remarkable works of the literature of the Middle Ages is a poem by the Comte de Bretagne, entitled "Proverbs of Marcol and Solomon."

Marcol is represented as a student, or rather, perhaps, as a rival of King Solomon. The work is a poem divided into stanzas of six lines each. The first three lines contain a proverb of Solomon; the next three, another proverb on the same subject, and in response, by Marcol.

Another poem of the same period is in the collection of M. Meon, entitled "Of Marco and Solomon." The responsive style is the same as that of the Comte de Bretagne, but the one hundred and thirty-seven proverbs which it contains are all new.

Still more nearly allied to the present inquiry is the fact that among the writers of the Middle Ages Solomon bore the reputation of a workman of highest skill. He was like the Volund or Wieland of the Scandinavian and Teutonic myths—the traditional smith who made the decorations of halls, the gay harness of war-horses, and the swords and lances of cavaliers. In the poems of the Middle Ages, whenever it becomes necessary to speak of any of these things as having been made with exquisite and surpassing skill, it is said to be "the work of Solomon" — *l'œuvre Salemon*.

Enough has been said to show that King Solomon was as familiar to the romancers of the Middle Ages as he was to the Jews of Palestine or to the eastern writers of Arabia and Persia. Philip de Thuan, who, in the 12th century, wrote his *Bestiary*, a sort of idealized natural history, says that by Solomon was meant any wise man—*Sacez par Salemuon sage gent entendum*.

About the same time that these fable-makers and song-writers of the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries were working over these stories about King Solomon, the makers of the Masonic Legend of the Craft were inventing their myths about the same monarch and the Temple which he built.

An agreement of time is here that suggests the popularity of King Solomon with the romancers of the Middle Ages made the use of his name in the Masonic Legend less difficult to those who arranged that mythical story.



Indeed, we might be led to suspect that the use of Solomon in their legends and traditions was first suggested to the Stonemasons and to the allied trade societies, such as the "Compagnons de la Tour" (Companions of the Tower) of France, from the frequent references to it by the romancers of that time.

The later myths connected with Solomon as the head of the association of Freemasons at the Temple were, at a much later period, borrowed, in great part, from the Talmudists,<sup>1</sup> and have no place among the song-writers and fable-makers of the Middle Ages.

<sup>1</sup> One well informed about the body of Jewish civil and priestly law that is not contained in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible.



## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THE EXTENSION OF THE ART INTO OTHER COUNTRIES



THE Legend of the Craft next proceeds to tell us how Freemasonry went "into divers countries," some of the Masons traveling to increase their own knowledge of their art, and others to use elsewhere abroad that which they already possessed.

But this subject is very briefly treated in the different manuscripts. The Halliwell poem says nothing of the progressive march of Freemasonry, except that it details almost as an actual event the ill-use of the "Four Crowned Martyrs" as Christian Freemasons, in the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletian, and we should almost be led to believe from the course of the poem that Freemasonry went directly into England from Egypt.

The Cooke MS. simply says that from Egypt, Freemasonry "went from land to land and from kingdom to kingdom," until it got to England.

We find the later manuscripts are a little more definite, although still brief. They merely tell us that many skillful craftsmen traveled into various countries, some that they might acquire more knowledge and skill, and others to teach those who had but little skill.

Certainly there is nothing that is myth or fable in this account. Every authentic history of architecture agrees in the claim that at an early period the various countries of Europe were traveled by bodies of builders in search of work in the building of religious and other edifices. The name, indeed, of "Traveling Freemasons," which was given to them, is familiar in architectural historical books.<sup>1</sup>

Truly, as George Godwin says, "There are few points in the Middle Ages more pleasing to look back upon than the existence

<sup>1</sup> See Hope's "Historical Essay on Architecture."



of the associated Masons; they are the bright spot in the general darkness of that period, the patch of verdure when all around is barren."<sup>1</sup> But this interesting subject is more fully discussed in another part of this work, where we treat of the authentic history of Freemasonry. This portion of the Legend can not be said to belong to the time before the accepted historical period.

Sufficient, for the present, for us to show that in this part, as elsewhere, the Legend of the Craft is not a mere fiction, but that the general statement of the spread of Freemasonry throughout Europe at an early period is proved by historical evidence.

When we examine the Legend of the Craft, it will be found to trace the growth of Freemasonry through its several stages of progress from Babylon and Assyria to Egypt, from Egypt to Judea, from Judea to France, and from France to England. Accepting Freemasonry and the early art of building as meaning the same thing, this line of progress will not be very different, with some necessary variations, to that assumed to be correct by writers on architecture. But the study of this subject belongs not to that which went before, but to the historical period of the Society, that is based on the evidence of fully accredited records.

<sup>1</sup> "The Builder," vol. ix, p. 463. .



## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### THE LEGEND OF CHARLES MARTEL AND NAMUS GRECUS



THE Legend now gets near the field of authentic history, but still having its traditional character, goes on to tell, but in a very few words, the entrance of Masonry into France.

We have this account given in the following language in the Dowland manuscript:

“And soe it befell that there was one curious Mason that height [was called] MAYMUS GRECUS, that had been at the making of Solomon’s temple, and he came into France, and there he taught the science of Masonrye to men of France. And there was one of the Regal lyne of Fraunce, that height CHARLES MARTELL;<sup>1</sup> and he was a man that loved well such a science, and drew to this MAYMUS GRECUS that is above said, and learned of him the science, and tooke upon him the charges and manners; and afterwards, by the grace of God, he was elect to be Kinge of France. And whan he was in his estate, he tooke Masons and did helpe to make men Masons that were none; and he set them to worke, and gave them both the charge and the manners and good paie, as he had learned of other Masons; and confirmed them a Charter from yeare to yeare, to holde their semble wher they would; and cherished them right much; and thus came the science into France.”

Now, this Legend is repeated, almost word for word, in all the later manuscripts right up to recent times.

But it is not even mentioned in the earliest of all the manuscripts — the Halliwell poem — and this proves again that the

<sup>1</sup> Bro. E. H. Dring in 1905 brought forward a theory, supported by evidence which even to so cautious an authority as Bro. W. J. Hughan seemed convincing, that the “Charles Martel” of our Charges is really a misnaming of his grandson Charlemagne. See the “Ars Quatuor Coronatorum,” xviii, page 172 and following pages. Bro. W. W. Covey Crump says, in a paper on “The Comacine Masters and Gothic Architecture,” Transactions of the Lodge of Research, Leicester, England, 1918–19, page 47, that whether Bro. Dring’s theory be sound or not “It is beyond question that Charlemagne was a great supporter of the Craft.”



two sets of recorded events and traditions are copied from quite different sources.

In the Cooke MS. the Legend is in the following words:

"Sumtyme ther was a worthye kyng in Frauns, that was clepyd Carolus secundus that ys to sey Charlys the secunde.<sup>1</sup> And this Charlys was elyte [elected] kyng of Frauns by the grace of God and by lynage [lineage or descent] also. And sume men sey that he was elite [elected] by fortune the whiche is fals as by cronycle he was of the kynges blode Royal. And this same kyng Charlys was a mason bifer that he was kyng. And after that he was kyng he lovyd masons and cherschid them and gaf them chargys and mannerys at his devise the whiche sum ben yet used in fraunce and he ordeynyd that they scholde have a semly [assembly] onys in the yere and come and speke togedyr and for to be reuled by masters and felows of thynges amysse."<sup>2</sup>

All absence of reference to *Namus Grecus* (a personage who will directly occupy our attention) in the Cooke document is worthy of critical notice.

We see that when Dr. Anderson was putting the Legend of the Craft into a modern shape, he left out any reference to *Namus Grecus* but he preserved the spirit of the Legend, so far as to say, that according to the old records of Freemasons, Charles Martel "sent over several expert craftsmen and learned architects into England at the desire of the Saxon kings."<sup>3</sup>

We shall attempt to prove, when in the course of this work the authentic history of Masonry comes to be treated, that the statement in the Legend of the Craft in relation to the condition of Freemasonry in France during the administration of Charles Martel is simply a historical fact. Claiming for the "Hammerer" the rank of King of France, while he assumed only the humble titles of Duke of the Franks and Mayor of the Palace, the legendists have only made a historical error of which more experienced writers might be guilty.

There is in the use of the name of *Namus Grecus*, an unknown Freemason, who is spoken of as being active in the age of both

<sup>1</sup> This does not affirm the theory of Bro. Dring, Charlemagne being known as Charles I.

<sup>2</sup> Cooke MS., lines 576-601.

<sup>3</sup> Anderson's "Constitutions," ed. 1723, p. 30.



Solomon and Charles Martel, certainly a seeming mixture of periods that requires further light and study.

We have in this *Namus Grecus* a puzzle that has long troubled Masonic students. Hawkins, *Concise Cyclopaedia*, says that so far, and he is a recent authority, no satisfactory explanation has been furnished of the real personality of this "curious craftsman." But we shall offer some suggestions for what they are worth, following the lead of Bro. Mackey whose comments on this as on other matters are sound and wise.

We may fairly suppose *Grecus* to be merely to show the fact that this person was a Greek. Now, the knowledge of his existence at the court of Charles Martel was most probably taken by the English legendist from a German or French source, because the Legend of the Craft is candid in admitting that the English Masons had collected the writings and charges from other countries. Prince Edwin is said to have made a proclamation that any Masons who "had any writing or understanding of the charges and the manners that were made before in this land [England] or in any other, that they should shew them forth." And there were found "some in French, some in Greek, some in English, and some in other languages."

If the account and the name of this Greek architect had been taken from a German document, the text would most probably have been "ein Maurer *Namens Grecus*"; or, if from the French, it would have been "un Maçon nommé *Grecus*." The English legendist would, probably, mistake the words *Namens Grecus*, or *nommé Grecus*, each of which means "he was named Grecus," or, literally, "a Mason by the name of Grecus," for the full name, and write him down as *Namus Grecus*. The *Maymus* in the Dowland MS. is evidently an error of the copyist. In the other manuscripts it is *Namus*. Surely we may not unfairly take the corrected reading, then, to be — "there was a Mason named (or called) The Greek."

Moreover, we can not admit of the claim that it is improbable that any legendist would have fallen into such an error. We must not forget that there are many other errors as to the spelling of names to be found in these *Old Records*. See, for instance, in these manuscripts such mistakes in spelling as *Hermarines* for *Hermes*, and *Englet* for *Euclid*; to say nothing of the copyist's sad blunder



in the Leland MS., where *Pythagore*, the French form of *Pythagoras*, has been crippled into *Peter Gower*. It is not at all unlikely that *Namens Grecus*, or *nommé Grecus*, should be changed into *Namus Grecus*.

There seems little or no doubt that the original Legend meant to say merely that in the time of Charles Martel it happened that a certain expert from Greece, a Greek Freemason, who had been to Jerusalem, brought the principles of Byzantine<sup>1</sup> architecture into France.

History proves that in the 8th century there was a flow of Grecian architects and workmen into Southern and Western Europe, because of persecutions that were inflicted on them by the Byzantine Emperors. The Legend, therefore, uses no spirit of fiction in mentioning the coming to France, at that period, of one of these architects.

There is a further historical fact that Charles the Great of France was a liberal patron of the arts and sciences, and that he especially promoted the study and use of architecture on the Byzantine or Greek model in his dominions.

Dr. Oliver, in the second edition of the *Constitutions*, repeats the Legend with a slight variation. He says that "Ethelbert, King of Mercia, and general monarch, sent to Charles Martel, the Right Worshipful Grand Master of France (father of King Pepin), who had been educated by Brother *Mimus Græcus*; he sent over from France (about A. D. 710) some expert Masons to teach the Saxons those laws and usages of the ancient fraternity, that had been happily preserved from the havock of the Goths."

Pritchard,<sup>2</sup> in his *Masonry Dissected*, gives, upon what authority is not now known, the Legend in the following form:

Euclid "communicated the art and mystery of Masonry to Hiram, the Master Mason concerned in the building of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, where was an excellent and curious Mason, whose name was *Mannon Grecus*, who taught the art

<sup>1</sup> Byzantium, the ancient name of Constantinople, now capital of Turkey, the word Byzantine being here applied to a style of early art peculiar to that region and the empire that centered there.

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Pritchard in 1730 published at London a book, *Masonry Dissected*, that went through some thirty editions in the eighteenth century. Oliver says, and Woodford repeats, that the author "was an unprincipled and needy brother." His treatise has neither authority nor credit.



of Masonry to one Carolus Marcil in France, who was afterwards elected King of France."

Krause has an interesting idea in regard to this change of the name to *Mannon Grecus*. He says that in using this name he thinks that Pritchard intended to refer to the celebrated scholar Mannon, or Nannon, who was noted in his time for his ability in the language and literature of Greece. Nannon lived in the reign of Charles the Bold, and was the successor of Erigena in directing the schools of France.

The explanation of the name that is offered by Dr. Krause is not acceptable. It depends upon a name not found in any of the old manuscripts. Besides, this philosopher did not live in the time of Charles Martel, but long afterwards. However, as we have seen, this latter point is not of much force with legend writers who mix centuries up at pleasure.

As far as the Legend regards Charles Martel as the patron of architecture or Freemasonry in France, one point remains to be mentioned. If there has been an error of the legendists in giving to Charles Martel the honor that really belonged to his successor, Charles the Great, it is not surprising when we consider how great was the lack of information that prevailed in those days of the science that treats of the order of events, chronology. However, it must be remarked, that at the present day the French Masonic writers speak of Charles Martel as the founder of Freemasonry in France.

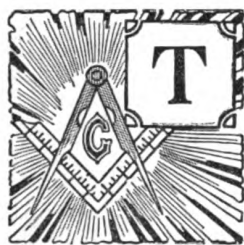
The error of making the Greek architect known to both Solomon and Charles Martel, is one which may be explained two ways. Either it is the use of a symbolic idea, referring to the close connection that had existed between Oriental and Byzantine architecture, or it may be excused as an instance of blundering chronology for which the spirit of the age, more than the writer of the Legend, is to be blamed. This objection will not, however, lie if we assume that *Namus Grecus* meant simply a Greek architect.

But this whole subject is so closely connected with the authentic history of Masonry, having really passed out of the prehistoric period, that it claims a future and more detailed study in its proper place.



## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### THE LEGEND OF ST. ALBAN



THE Legend of the Craft now goes on to tell of the history of the bringing of Freemasonry into England, in the time of St. Alban, who lived in the 3d century.

The Legend referring to the first martyr of England is not mentioned in the Halliwell poem, but is first found in the Cooke MS., in the following words: "And sone after that come seynt Adhabell into Englonde, and he convertyd seynt Albon to cristendome. And seynt Albon lovyd well masons, and he gaf hem fyrst her charges and maners fyrst in Englonde. And he ordeyned convent<sup>1</sup> to pay for their travayle."<sup>2</sup>

Later manuscripts, for some time, say nothing of St. Adhabell. When we get to the Krause MS. in the beginning of the 18th century, we find mention of St. Amphibalus, who is said in that document to have been the teacher of St. Alban. But this St. Amphibalus, of which the Adhabell of the Cooke MS. is seemingly an error in spelling, is so doubtful a person, that we may rejoice that the later copyists have not as a rule thought proper to follow the Cooke document and give him a place in the Legend. However, the name is not entirely mythical as we find it in the writings of Robert of Monmouth, 1140, as well as, for example, in the William Watson MS., 1687.

As a matter of fact, *amphibalum* was the Latin name of a cloak, worn by priests of the French Roman Catholic Church

<sup>1</sup> Cooke translates this word into "convenient times," supplying a second word. But a better choice is *suitable* or *proper*, which is an old meaning of *convenient*. "He ordained suitable pay for their labor," and this agrees with the later manuscripts which impress the fact that St. Alban "made their pay right good."

<sup>2</sup> Cooke MS., lines 602-611.



over their other clothes.<sup>1</sup> It was a garment that somehow became altered into a saint, as the handkerchief on which Christ left the image of His face when, as it is said, it was handed to Him on His way to Calvary, by a pious Jewess, became from the Greco-Latin *vera icon*, "the true image," converted into St. Veronica. The Masonic writers of old are not the only legendists who draw deeply on our powers of belief.

Church history furnishes only the following few details of St. Alban, and even of these some are doubtful, or at least lack the stamp of acceptance by the authorities.

He was born (so runs the tradition) in the 3d century, in Hertfordshire, England, near the town of Verulanium. Going to Rome, he served for seven years as a soldier under the Emperor Diocletian. He then returned with a companion and teacher Amphibalus, to Britain, and betook himself to Verulanium. When the persecutions of the Christians began in Britain, Amphibalus was sought for, as one who had become converted to the new religion; but as he could not be found, St. Alban voluntarily presented himself in the other's place before the judge, and after undergoing torture was imprisoned. Soon after this, the hiding place of Amphibalus having been discovered, both he and St. Alban suffered death for being Christians.

Four centuries after this occurred, Offa, King of the Mercians, erected a monastery at Holmehurst, the hill where he was buried, and soon after the town of St. Albans arose in its vicinity. When the Christian religion became powerful in England, the Church paid great honors to the memory of the first martyr. A chapel was erected over his grave, which, according to the Venerable Bede, was of admirable workmanship.

The Masonic Legend contains details that are not furnished by the one coming to us from the Church. According to it, St. Alban was the steward of the household of Carausius, he who had revolted from the Emperor Maximilian, and taken over the government of England. Carausius employed him in building the town walls. St. Alban, thus having the control of the Craft, treated them with great kindness, increased their pay, and gave

<sup>1</sup> Curiously enough, according to the old records, it is reported that among the spurious relics sent, when fearing the Danish invasion, in the reign of Edward the Confessor, by the Abbot of St. Albans, to the monks of Ely, was a very rough, shagged old coat, which it was said had been usually worn by St. Amphibalus.



















them a charter to hold general meetings. He assisted them in making Masons, and framed for them a constitution — for such is the meaning of the phrase, “gave them charges.”

There is sufficient historical evidence to show that architecture was brought into England by the Roman workmen, who followed, as was their custom, the soldiers of the empire, made themselves at home in the conquered countries, and engaged in the construction not only of camps and forts, but also when peace was restored they began the building of temples and even of private structures. Architectural ruins and Latin inscriptions, which still remain in many parts of Britain, show the labors and the skill of these Roman workmen and architects. They sustain the claim of the Legend, that Masonry, which, it must be remembered, is, in the *Old Records*, only another name for architecture, was brought into England during the time when it was first taken over by the Roman Empire.

Examining further the particular claims that St. Alban was the patron of Freemasons, that he exercised the government of a chief over the Craft, and improved their condition by increasing their wages, we may explain this as the expression of a symbolical idea, in which the story is not made of misleading falsehoods, but its dates and personages are merely used for other than strictly historical purposes.

Carausius, the Legend does not mention by name. It simply refers to some king of England, of whose household St. Alban was the steward. Carausius assumed the government in the year in which St. Alban suffered death. The error of making him the patron of St. Alban is not, therefore, to be blamed upon the legendist, but upon Dr. Anderson, who made this mixture of history in the second edition of his *Constitutions*. Although he states that “this is asserted by all the old copies of the *Constitutions*,”<sup>1</sup> we fail to find it in any that are now in existence and Anderson himself says nothing about it in his own first edition.

This “Legend of St. Alban,” as it has been called, is worthy of further study. The foundation of this story was first laid by the writer of the Cooke MS., or, rather, copied by him from the tradition existing among the Craft at that time. Its form

<sup>1</sup> Anderson, “Constitutions,” 2d edition, p. 57.



was altered later on and the details extended in the Dowland MS. Tradition always grows in the progress of time. This form and these details were preserved in all the following manuscript Constitutions, until they were still further altered and enlarged by Anderson, Preston, and other Masonic writers of the eighteenth century.

The liberal additions of these later writers have no concern for us in any attempted explanation of the actual meaning of the Legend. Its true form and spirit are to be found only in the Dowland MS. of the middle of the 16th century, and in those which were copied from it, up to the Papworth, in the 18th century. To these, and not to anything written after the period of the Revival, 1717, we must direct our attention.

Accepting that on the conquest of England by the Roman power, the architects who had come with the victorious soldiers brought into the defeated country their skill in Freemasonry, it is very likely that some master workmen among them had been more noted than others for their skill, and, indeed, it is naturally to be supposed that to such skillful builders the control of the Craft must have been given. Whether there were one or more of these chief architects, St. Alban, if not actually one of them, was, by the lapse of time and the not unusual process by which legends or gossip are added on to a plain historical fact, adopted by the legendists as their chief and master.

Who was the principal patron of the Architects or Freemasons during the time when England was governed by the Romans, is not so material as is the fact that architecture, with other branches of the arts of civilization, was introduced at that period into the island by its conquerors. This is a historical fact. The Legend of the Craft agrees at this point with authentic history.

It is also a historical fact that when, by the pressure of the Northern hosts of enemies upon Rome, it was found necessary to withdraw all the soldiers of the Roman Empire from the various colonies which they had defended against foes without and held as their own against rebellion within, the arts and sciences, and among them architecture, began to decay in England. The natives, with the few Roman colonists who had settled among them, were left to defend themselves from the attacks of the



Picts on the north, and the Danish and Saxon pirates in the east and south. The arts of civilization suffered a depression in the noisy fury of war. Science can not flourish amid the clang and clash of arms. This decline of all architectural progress in England continued for some centuries and is thus told to us in the quaint style of the Legend:

“Right soone after the decease of Saint Albone, there came divers wars into the realme of England of divers Nations, soe that the good rule of Masonrye was destroyed unto the tyme of Kinge Athelstone’s days.”

There is far more of history than of fiction in this part of the Legend.

A very interesting point of the Legend of the Craft to which our attention may be directed, is that referring to the organization of Freemasonry at the city of York in the 10th century. This part of the Legend is of much importance. The prehistorical here verges so closely upon the historical period, that the true account of the rise and progress of Freemasonry can not be justly understood until each of these elements has been carefully attached to its proper period. This subject will therefore get critical attention.



## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### THE YORK LEGEND



THE decline and decay of all architectural art and enterprise having lasted for so long a period in Britain, the Legend of the Craft next proceeds to account for its revival in the 10th century and in the reign of Athelstan. His son Edwin<sup>1</sup> called a meeting, or General Assembly, of the Freemasons at York in the year 926, and there revived the institution, giving to the Craft a new code of laws.

Now, it is impossible to attach to this portion of the Legend, absolutely and without any reservation, the taint of fiction. The gathering of the Craft of England at the city of York, in the year 926, has been accepted by both the Operative Freemasons who preceded the Revival in 1717, and by the Speculatives who succeeded them, up to the present day, as a historical fact that did not admit of dispute. The two classes of Legends — the one represented by the Halliwell poem, and the other by the later manuscripts — agree in giving the same statement. The Cooke MS., which holds a middle place between the two, also contains it. But the Halliwell and the Cooke MSS., which are of older date, give more fully the details of what may be called this revival of English Freemasonry. Thoroughly to understand the subject, it will be necessary to compare the three accounts given in the several sets of manuscripts.

The Halliwell or Regius MS. poem of about the year 1390 contains the account in the following words. We will first give

<sup>1</sup> Edwin is in some manuscripts spoken of as the King's brother instead of son. The latter word is favored by most manuscript writers. Historians are inclined to doubt that Athelstan had any son Edwin, and the brother of that name was drowned in youth. Perhaps the Edwin may be the King of Northumberland, baptized in 627 at York where he built a stone church. But 627 is not the year 926 or conveniently near to it for this King Edwin to qualify, though the suggestion has found favor.



it freed of its old style of language, for the convenience of the reader inexpert in early English, and then follow with a quotation from the original:

"This craft came into England, as I tell you, in the time of good King Athelstane's reign. He made them both hall and also chamber, and lofty churches of great honour, to recreate him in both day and night and to worship his God with all his strength. This good lord loved this craft full well, and purposed to strengthen it in every part, on account of several defects which he discovered in the craft. He sent about into the land after all the masons of the craft to come straight to him, to amend all these defects by good counsel, if it could be done. Then he permitted an assembly to be made of various lords according to their rank, dukes, earls, and barons also, knights, squires, and many more, and the great burgesses of that city, they were all there in their degree; these were there, each one in every way to make laws for the society of these masons. There they sought by their wisdom how they might govern it. There they arranged fifteen articles, and there they made fifteen points."<sup>1</sup>

The original is as follows:

"Thys craft com ynto England as y you say,  
Yn tyme of good kynge Athelston's day;  
He made the both halle and eke boure,  
And hye templus of gret honoure,  
To sportyn hym yn bothe day and nyghth,  
And to worschepe his God with alle hys myghth.  
Thys goode lorde loved thys craft ful wel,  
And purposud to strenthyn hyt ever del,  
For dyvers defautys that yn the craft he fonde;  
He sende aboute ynto the londe  
After alle the masonus of the crafte  
To come to hym ful evene stragfte.  
For to amende these defaultys alle  
By good counsel gef hyt mygth falle.  
A semblé thenne he cowthe let make  
Of dyvers lordis in here state

<sup>1</sup> Halliwell MS., lines 61-87. The articles refer to the general government of the Craft and the points to the individual service or conduct of the Craftsmen themselves. Point is by an interesting coincidence the word meaning to finish the joints of masonry with mortar or cement and may thus very happily be used in reference to the rules for the best relations to exist between one Freemason and another.



Dukys, erlys and barnes also,  
 Knythys, sqwyers and mony mo,  
 And the grete burges of that syté,  
 They were ther alle yn here degré;  
 These were there uchon algate,  
 To ordeyne for these masonus estate,  
 Ther they sowgton ly here wytte  
 How they mygthyn governe hytte:  
 Fyftene artyculus they there sowgton,  
 And fyftene poyntys ther they wroghton."

Nearly a hundred years afterward we find the Legend, in the Cooke MS., as follows:

"And after that was a worthy kynge in Englonde that was callyd Athelstone, and his yongest sone lovyd well the sciens of Gemetry, and he wyst well that handcraft had the practyke of Gemetry so well as masons, wherefore he drew him to consell and lerynd [the] practyke of that sciens to his speculatyfe.<sup>1</sup> For of speculatyfe he was a master, and he lovyd well masonry and masons. And he bicomme a mason hymselfe. And he gaf hem [gave them] charges and names<sup>2</sup> as it is now usyd in Englonde and in other countries. And he ordeyned that they schulde have resonabull pay. And purchesed [obtained] a fre patent of the kyng that they schulde make a ssembly when they saw resonably tyme a [to] come togedir to her [their] counsell of the whiche charges, manors & semble as is write and taught in the boke of our charges wherefor I leve it at this tyme."<sup>3</sup>

Another and a later part of the manuscript, which appears to have been taken from the aforesaid "boke of charges," with some additional details, has the following words:

"After that, many yeris, in the tyme of Kyng Adhelstane, wiche was sum tyme kynge of Englonde, bi his counsell and

<sup>1</sup> Cooke calls particular attention to this word as being of much special meaning and important value. However, it is only fair to say that some students think it simply means that the king added a practical knowledge of masonry or architecture to his former merely speculative or theoretical acquaintance with the art. The word is not easy to define as used by the manuscript writers in this place. A master of "speculatyfe" may mean something far beyond the present use of the words. Such a phrase in the older meaning of the words could stand for a seer, a person of much learning and wisdom, a philosopher and teacher. The writer of the manuscript makes a distinction between the ordinary trade of the builder or mason, the art of geometry, and the speculative science. So much is at least clear.

<sup>2</sup> This is evidently an error of the pen for *maners*, i.e., *usages*.

<sup>3</sup> Cooke MS., lines 611-642.



other gret lordys of the lond by comyn [common] assent for grete default y-fennde [found] among masons thei ordeyend a certayne reule amongys hem [them]. On [one] tyme of the yere or in iii yere as nede were to the kyng and gret lordys of the londe and all the comente [community], from provynce to provynce and fro countre to countre congregacions schulde be made by maisters, of all maisters masons and felaus in the forsayd art. And so at such congregacions, they that be made masters schold be examined of the articuls after written & be ransacked [examined] whether they be abull and kunnyng to the profyte of the lordys hem to serve [to serve them] and to the honour of the forsayd art."<sup>1</sup>

One hundred years afterward we find this Legend repeated in the Dowland MS., but with some important variations. This Legend is given in the chapter dealing with the Legend of the Craft. For the convenience of immediate comparison with the other documents it will be well to present it here. It is in the following words:

"Right soone after the decease of Saint Albone there came divers warrs into the realme of England of divers Nations, soe that the good rule of Masonrye was destroyed unto the tyme of King Athelstones days that was a worthy Kinge of England, and brought this land into good rest and peace and builded many great works of Abbyes and Towres and other many divers buildings and loved well Masons. And he had a Sonn that height Edwinne, and he loved Masons much more than his father did. And he was a great practiser in Geometry, and he drew him much to talke and to commune with Masons and to learne of them science, and afterwards for love that he had to Masons and to the science he was made Mason,<sup>2</sup> and he gatt of the Kinge his father a Chartour and Commission to hold every yeare once an Assemble wher that ever they would within the realme of England, and to correct within themselves defaults and trespasses that were done within the science. And he held himsele

<sup>1</sup> Cooke MS., lines 693-719.

<sup>2</sup> A later manuscript, the Lansdowne, names the place where he was made as Windsor. This statement is also in the Antiquity MS. It may here be observed that nothing more clearly proves the great carelessness of the transcribers of these manuscripts than the fact that although they must have all been familiar with the name of Edwin, one of them spells it *Ladrian* and another *Hoderine*.



an assemble at Yorke, and there he made Masons and gave them charges and taught them the manners, and commanded that rule to be kept ever after. And tooke them the Chartour and Commission to keepe and made ordinance that it should be renewed from kinge to kinge.

"And when the Assemble was gathered he made a cry that all old Masons and young, that had any writeings or understanding of the charges and the manners that were made before in this land, or in any other, that they should shew them forth. And when it was proved there was founden some in Frenche and some in Greek and some in English and some in other languages; and the intent of them all was founden all one. And he did make a booke thereof, and how the science was founded. And he himselfe bad and commanded that it should be readd or tould, when that any Mason should be made, for to give him his Charge. And fro that day into this tyme manners of Masons have beene kept in that forme as well as men might governe it. And furthermore divers Assembles have beene put and ordayned certain charges by the best advice of Masters and Fellowes."

It will be remarked that in neither of the two oldest manuscripts, the Halliwell and the Cooke, is there any mention of Prince Edwin, or of the city of York. We may agree with Bro. Woodford, that as the fact of the Assembly is stated in all the later traditions, and as a city is mentioned whose freemen were present, we may fairly understand both of the oldest manuscripts also to refer to York.<sup>1</sup> At all events, their silence as to the place is not positive proof that it was not York, as opposed to the strong claim of the later manuscripts that it was.

We see, then, that all the old Legends say straight out and by inference, that York was the city where the first General Masonic Assembly was held in England, and that it was called together by the authority of King Athelstan.

The next point in which all the later manuscripts, except the Harleian,<sup>2</sup> agree is, that the Assembly was called by Prince Edwin, the King's son.

<sup>1</sup> "On the Connection of York with the History of Freemasonry in England." By A. F. A. Woodford, A.M., in Hughan's "Masonic Sketches and Reprints," p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> The Harleian MS. makes no mention of Prince Edwin, but credits the organization of Masonry at York to King Athelstan himself.



The Legend does not here most certainly agree with history, for there is no record that Athelstan had any son. He had, however, a brother of that name.

Edward the Elder, the son of Alfred the Great, died in the year 925, leaving several legitimate sons and one natural one, Athelstan. The latter, who was the eldest of the sons of Edward, obtained the throne, notwithstanding the stain on his birth, on account of his age, which better fitted him to govern at a time when the kingdom was engaged in foreign and domestic wars.

There is complete agreement among the several historians in giving Athelstan the character of a just and wise ruler, and of a wise man of affairs. It has been said of him that he was the most able and active of the ancient princes of England. What his grandfather, the great Alfred, begun in his efforts to unite the little kingdoms into which the land was divided into one powerful state, Athelstan, by his energy, his political wisdom, and his military strength, was enabled to perfect, so that he has been justly called the first monarch of all England.

While he was King he was constantly engaged in many wars, but he did not neglect to foster the study of peaceful aims, and he encouraged by a liberal favor the arts and especially architecture.

The only stain upon his character is the charge that having suspected his brother Edwin of being engaged in a conspiracy against him, he caused that prince to be drowned. In spite of the efforts of Preston to disprove this charge, the general agreement of the old writers leaves little room to doubt its truth. If anything could atone for this cruel act of state policy, it would be the bitter sorrow and remorse of conscience which led the guilty to endure a severe penance of seven years.

The Saxon historians make no mention of Edwin, except when they speak of his untimely death. If we may judge of his character from this silence, we must believe that he was without any brilliant qualities of mind, neither well known by the doing of any important act.

Among the half-brothers of Athelstan, the legitimate children of Edward the Elder, Edmund seems to have been his favorite. He kept him by his side on battle-fields, lived single for his



sake, and when he died in 941, left to him the succession to the throne.

There is another Edwin of leading character in the records of Saxon England, to whom attention has been directed in connection with this Legend, as having the best claim to be called the founder or reviver of English Masonry.

Edwin, King of Northumbria, it may be said, was in his narrow sphere, the king of a small state, but little inferior in abilities or virtues to Athelstan.

At the time of his birth, in 590, Northumbria was divided into two kingdoms, that of Bernicia, north of the Humber, and that of the Deira, on the south of the same river. Of the former, Ethelfrith was King, and of the latter, Ella, the father of Edwin.

Ella died in 593, and was succeeded by Edwin, an infant of three years of age.

Soon after, Ethelfrith invaded the possessions of Edwin, and attached them by force to his own state.

Edwin was sent to Wales, whence when he grew older he was obliged to flee, and he passed many years in exile, principally at the Court of Redwald, King of East Anglia. By the assistance of this monarch he was enabled to make war upon his old enemy, Ethelfrith, who, having been slain in battle, and his sons having fled into Scotland, Edwin not only regained his own throne, but that of his enemy also, and in the year 617 became the King of Northumbria, of which the city of York was made the capital.

Edwin was originally a pagan, but his mind was studious, and this made him, says Turner, more intellectual than any of the Saxon Kings who had preceded him. He was thus led to a logical examination of the Christian faith, which he finally accepted, and was publicly baptized at York, on Easter day, in the year 627. The ceremony was publicly performed in the Church of St. Peter the Apostle, a building which he had caused to be hastily constructed of wood, for the purposes of divine service, during the time that he was receiving the religious instructions before he was baptized.

As soon as he was baptized, he built, says Bede, under the direction of Paulinus, his religious instructor and bishop, in the same place, a much larger and nobler church of stone.



During the time of Edwin, and of his successors in the same century, religious architecture greatly flourished, and many large churches were built. Edwin was slain in battle in 633, having reigned for seventeen years.

The Venerable Bede gives us the best testimony we could desire as to the character of Edwin as ruler, when he tells us that in all of the state there was such perfect peace that a woman with a new-born babe might walk from sea to sea without receiving any harm. Another incident that he tells is significant of Edwin's care and forethought for the comfort of his people. Where there were springs of water near the highways, he caused posts to be fixed with drinking vessels attached to them for the convenience of travelers. By such acts, and others of a higher character, by his help of the arts, and his strict attention to justice, he secured the love of his subjects.

So much of history was necessary that the reader might understand the argument in reference to the true meaning of the York Legend which we discuss in its proper place.

Anderson and Preston credit the honor of organizing Masonry and calling a General Assembly to Edwin the brother.<sup>1</sup> Their versions are merely enlarged copies of the original Legend.

But in the Roberts *Constitutions*, printed in 1722, and which were claimed to have been copied from a manuscript about five hundred years old, but without any proof (as the original has never been recovered), the name of Edwin is left out, and Athelstan himself is said to have been the reviver of the institution. The language of this manuscript, as published by J. Roberts, is as follows:<sup>2</sup>

"He [Athelstan] began to build many Abbies, Monasteries, and other religious houses, as also Castles and divers Fortresses for defence of his realm. He loved *Masons* more than his father; he greatly study'd *Geometry*, and sent into many lands for men expert in the science. He gave them a very large charter to hold a yearly assembly, and power to correct offenders in the said science; and the king himself caused a General Assembly of all *Masons* in his realm, at York, and there were made many *Masons*,

<sup>1</sup> Hughan thinks that Dr. Anderson probably had a copy of the "Spencer" or "Cole MS." before him in 1738 as this was printed in 1729. The so-called "Spencer" family of manuscripts call Edwin the King's brother, not his son.

<sup>2</sup> The Roberts "Constitutions" and the Harleian MS., No. 1942, are evidently copies from the same original, if not one from the other. The story of Athelstan is, of course, identical in both.



and gave them a deep charge for observation of all such articles as belonged unto *Masonry* and delivered them the said Charter to keep."

The Harleian and Roberts manuscripts agree with the Regius in leaving out all references to Prince Edwin.

A passage in the Harleian and Roberts MSS. is worthy of notice. The recent manuscripts which speak of Edwin as obtaining the Charter, say that "he loved Masons much more than his father did" — meaning Athelstan. But the Harleian and Roberts MSS., speaking of King Athelstan, use the same language, but with a different reference, and say of King Athelstan, that "he loved Masons more than his father" — meaning King Edward, whose son Athelstan was.

Of the two statements, that of the Harleian and Roberts MSS. is much more agreeable to history than the other. Athelstan was a lover of Freemasons, for he was a great patron of architecture, and many public buildings were erected during his reign. But it is not recorded in history that Prince Edwin exhibited any such love for Freemasonry or Architecture as is credited to him in the old records, certainly not a regard equal to that of Athelstan. On the contrary, Edward, the son of Alfred and the father of Athelstan, was not noted during his reign for any marked favor of the arts, and especially of architecture; and it is, therefore, certain that his son Athelstan exhibited a greater love to Masons or Architecture than he.

There arises a suspicion that the Legend was originally framed in the form presented to us by the Halliwell or Regius poem. Then it was copied apparently by the writers of the Harleian and Roberts MSS., and that the insertion of the name of Prince Edwin was an afterthought of the copiers of the more recent manuscripts. This insertion of Edwin's name, and the error of making him a son of Athelstan, probably arose from a confusion of the mythical Edwin with a different person, the earlier Edwin, who was King of Northumbria.

We may note that the son of Athelstan is not called Edwin in all of the recent manuscripts. In one Sloane MS. he is called *Ladrian*, in another *Hegme*, and in the Lodge of Hope MS. *Hoderine*. This fact might mean that there was some confusion and perhaps a disagreement in putting the name of Prince Edwin into



the Legend. The other supposition is more probable from our own point of view and this is the belief that these mixed up references are merely the result of a careless copying of the manuscripts.

We have then to account for this use of an apparently mythical personage into the story, by which the reliability of the Legend is seriously affected.

Anderson, and after him Preston, attempts to get out of the difficulty by calling Edwin the brother, and not the son, of Athelstan. Athelstan did have a younger brother named Edwin, whom some historians have charged him with putting to death. Just so far the Legend might not be considered as out of time with history. But as nearly all the manuscripts which speak of Edwin call him the king's son and not his brother, notwithstanding the contrary statement of Anderson,<sup>1</sup> we suggest another explanation.

English history records a royal Edwin, whose love for the arts and sciences, whose wise state policies, and whose favor of architecture, must have gained him the respect and the affection of the early English Freemasons. Edwin, King of Northumbria, one of the seven kingdoms into which England was divided during the Anglo-Saxon period from the 5th to the 9th centuries, died in 633, after a reign of sixteen years, which was noted for the reforms which he made, for the wise laws which he worked out and enforced, for the bringing of Christianity into his kingdom, and for the improvement which he effected in the moral, social and mental condition of his subjects. When he ascended the throne the northern headquarters of the Anglican Church had been placed at York, where it still remains. The king favored Paulinus, the bishop, and gave him with a house other property in that city.

To this Edwin, and not to the brother of Athelstan, some modern Masonic students have supposed that the Legend of the Craft refers.

This opinion is not altogether a new one. Long ago it seems to have been a firm belief among the Freemasons of the northern

<sup>1</sup> Anderson says in the second edition of the "Book of Constitutions" that in all the Old Constitutions it is written Prince Edwin, the king's brother—a statement that is at once refuted by a reference to all the manuscripts where the word is usually, though not always, *son*.



part of England. For in 1726, in an address delivered before the Grand Lodge of York by its Junior Grand Warden, Francis Drake, he speaks of it as being well known and accepted, in the following words:

"You know we can boast that the first Grand Lodge ever held in England was held in this city [York]; where Edwin, the first Christian King of the Northumbers, about the six hundredth year after Christ, and who laid the foundation of our Cathedral,<sup>1</sup> sat as Grand Master."

Bro. A. F. A. Woodford, a Masonic student of high standing and having especial knowledge of Freemasonry in northern England, accepts this claim, and finds support in the facts that the town of Derventio, now Auldby, six miles from York, the supposed location of the Edwin of the Legend, was also the chief residence of Edwin, King of Northumbria, and that the buildings, said in one manuscript to have been erected by the legendary Edwin, were really built, as is known from history, by the Northumbrian Edwin.

With these proofs, the inquirer will have little or no hesitation in accepting this version of the Legend, and will admit that the writers of the later manuscripts fell into an error in taking Edwin, the son (as they called him, but really the brother) of Athelstan, for Edwin, the King of Northumbria.

We must admit that the difference of dates presents a difficulty, there being about three hundred years between the reigns of Edwin of Northumbria, and Athelstan of England. But that difficulty may be met by the following explanation:

The earlier series of manuscripts, of which the Halliwell poem is an example,<sup>2</sup> make no mention of Edwin, but assign the revival of Masonry in the 10th century to King Athelstan.

More recent manuscripts, of which the Dowland is the earliest, bring Prince Edwin into the Legend and give him the honor of having obtained a charter from Athelstan, and of having held an Assembly at York.

<sup>1</sup> Bede (L. 2., c. 13) and Rapin (p. 246) both support this claim that the foundations of the York Cathedral, or Minster, were laid in the reign of Edwin.

<sup>2</sup> That the Legend in the Roberts "Constitutions" agrees in this respect with the older work, and differs from that in the more recent manuscripts, gives some force to the claim that it was copied from a manuscript five hundred years old.



We thus find two forms of the Legend. For the sake of distinction, these may be styled the older and the later. The older Legend makes Athelstan the reviver of Masonry in England, and says nothing at all of Edwin. The later takes this honor from Athelstan and gives it to Prince Edwin, who is called his son.

This reference to Edwin is, then, an addition to the older legend, and was put into it by the later Legendists, as will be plainly seen if the following extract from the Dowland MS. be read, and all the words there printed in italics be left out. So read, the record will agree quite closely with the one referring to the same events in the Roberts MS., which was undoubtedly a copy from some older manuscript containing the Legend in its earliest form, wherein there is no mention of Prince Edwin. Here is the extract to be read; but by leaving out the words in italics:

"The good rule of Masonry was destroyed unto the tyme of Kinge Athelstone dayes that was a worthy Kinge of England, and brought this land into good rest and peace; and builded many great works of Abbyes and Towres, and other many divers buildings and loved well Masons. *And he had a sonn that height Edwinne*, and he loved Masons much more than his father did. And he was a great practiser in Geometry; and he drew him much to talke and to commune with Masons, and to learne of them science; and afterward for love that he had to Masons and to the science he was made a Mason and he gatt<sup>1</sup> [*i.e.*, he gave] *of the Kinge his father* a Charter and commission to hold every year once an Assemble, wher that ever they would, within the realme of England; and to correct within themselves defaults and trespasses that were done within the science. And he held himselfe an Assemble at Yorke, and there he made Masons, and gave them charges, and taught them the manners, and commanded that rule to be kept ever after, and tooke then the Char-tour and Commission to keepe, and made ordinance that it should be renewed from Kinge to Kinge."

<sup>1</sup> "Gatt" is used for *given* or *granted*, in an undoubted historical document, Athelstan's charter to the town of Beverly.

"Yat I, the Kynge Adelston,  
Has *gaten* and given to St. John  
Of Beverlae, etc."



If only these thirteen words in italics are left out we are at once free of all difficulty, and we bring the Legend into exact agreement with the tradition of the older manuscripts.

Thus changed we see that it means:

1. That King Athelstan was a great patron of the arts of civilization — “he brought the land into rest and peace.” This statement is proved by the facts of history.

2. He paid especial attention to architecture and the art of building, and adorned his country with abbeys, towns,<sup>1</sup> and many other edifices. History confirms this also.

3. He was more interested in, and gave a greater help to, architecture than his father and predecessor, Edward — another historical fact.

4. He gave to the Masons or Architects a charter to form them into a gild, a legalized body of operative tradesmen, and called an assembly of the Craft at York. This last item is altogether traditional. Historians are silent on the subject, just as they are on the forming of a Grand Lodge in 1717. The mere silence of historians as to the formation of a gild of craftsmen or a private society is no proof that such gild or society was not formed. The truth of the statement that King Athelstan caused an assembly of Masons to be held in the year 926 at the city of York, depends solely on a tradition, which nevertheless has long been accepted by the whole Masonic world as a fact.

That York was the place where an assembly was called by Athelstan in the year 926 is less probable when we refer to the order and relation of historical events.

Let us look briefly at the known facts. In 925 Athelstan became king. At that time Sigtryg was King of Northumbria, which formed no part of Athelstan's kingdom. To Sigtryg, who had just been converted to Christianity, Athelstan gave his sister in marriage. But the Northumbrian king proved false to the faith and his brother-in-law went to war with him. Sigtryg having died in the meantime, his sons fled, one into Ireland and the other into Scotland, and Athelstan took Northumbria for his own.

<sup>1</sup> Mackey considers that towns is meant by towers, *toures*, but the word has been frequently used by the old manuscripts to mean forts. That *toures* is a blunder of the copyist is in the light of modern research not now as probable as it seemed in Mackey's time.



This occurred in the year 926. While pursuing the sons of Sigtryg, one of whom had taken refuge in the city of York, whose citizens he vainly sought to enlist in his favor, is it likely that Athelstan would have selected a period of war, and a city within the country just taken from an enemy, instead of his own capital, for the time and place of holding an assembly of Masons?

However unlikely that may be, it is not impossible. If we admit the tradition may be correct as to York, then the time should be advanced by a few years to that happy period when Athelstan had restored the land "into good rest and peace."

The important question is, whether this tradition is mythical or historical, fiction or truth. Fair criticism applied to the probabilities will aid us in solving this problem.

There is nothing in the personal character of Athelstan, nothing in the history of his time, nothing in the well-known manner of his royal authority and government, that forbids the probability that what is credited to him in the Legend of the Craft actually took place.

Taking his grandfather, the great Alfred, as his pattern, he was liberal in all his ideas, patronized learning, erected many churches, monasteries, and other edifices of importance, encouraged the translation of the Bible into Anglo-Saxon, and, what is of great value to the present question, gave charters to many gilds or operative companies as well as to several cities.

We know from historical records that in the time of Athelstan the *frith-gildan*, free gilds or brotherhoods, were incorporated by law. From these arose the craft-gilds or associations having fraternal relations and giving mutual aid, resulting in the present-day trade companies of England.

There would be nothing improbable in the claim that he extended his protection to the operative Freemasons, whose art we know that he used in the many public and religious buildings which he was engaged in erecting. It is even more than likely to suppose that the Masons were among the societies to whom he granted charters or acts of incorporation.

With the Rev. Bro. Woodford, whose opinion as a Masonic student is of great value, we are disposed to accept a tradition of respected age, and for so long a period believed in by the Craft



as a historical record in so far as the obtaining of a charter from Athelstan and the holding of an assembly. "I see no reason, therefore," he says, "to reject so old a tradition that under Athelstan the Operative Freemasons obtained his patronage and met in General Assembly."<sup>1</sup>

If we admit the fact of Athelstan's favor and of the Assembly meeting at some place, we next have the difficulty of explaining the use of the story about Prince Edwin.

There can be no doubt that the framers of the later Legend had confused the brother, whom they in error had called the son of Athelstan, with a preceding king of the same name, that is, with Edwin, King of Northumbria, who, in the 7th century, did what another Edwin may have done in the 10th. That is to say, he favored the Freemasons of his time, brought the art of building into his kingdom, and probably held an Assembly at York, his capital city.

We may suppose that the earlier Masons of the south of England, who gave us the first Legend of the Craft, such as is presented to us in the old poem, first published by Halliwell in 1840, and also in the Harleian manuscript and in the one printed by Roberts in 1722, were unacquainted with the legend of Edwin of Northumbria. Although, if we may believe Bro. Drake, it was a well-known tradition in the north of England. The earlier legends of the south, therefore, gave to Athelstan alone the honor of favoring the Freemasons and holding an Assembly at York in 926. This was, therefore, the primitive Legend of the Craft among the Freemasons of London and the southern part of the kingdom.

In time these southern Freemasons, because of being better acquainted, became aware of the tradition that King Edwin of Northumbria had also favored the Freemasons of his kingdom, but at an earlier period. The two traditions were, of course, at first kept distinct. There was, perhaps, a dislike among the Freemasons of the south to lessen the claims of Athelstan as the first reviver, after St. Alban, of Freemasonry in England, and to give the honor to a king who lived three hundred years before in the north of the island.

<sup>1</sup> "The Connection of York with the History of Freemasonry in England," in Hughan's "Unpublished Records of the Craft," p. 168.



This backwardness, added to the confusion to which all mouth-to-ear tradition is subject, coupled with the fact that there was an Edwin who was a near relative of Athelstan, resulted in the use of this later Edwin for the true one.

Years were required to do this — their backwardness persisting, the confusion of the traditions increasing, until at last the southern Freemasons, altogether losing sight of the Northumbrian tradition as distinct from that of Athelstan, mixed up the two traditions into one, and, with the neglect or want of information about history that was so common in that age, and especially among uncultured craftsmen, they put Edwin, the brother of Athelstan,<sup>1</sup> for Edwin, the King of Northumbria, and thus formed a new Legend of the Craft such as was repeated by Anderson, and after him by Preston, and which has lasted to the present day.

If we correct the story of Edwin, as it is told in the later Legend, and accept it as referring to Edwin of Northumbria, and as actually told in the tradition peculiar to the Freemasons of the northern part of England, we find that in the first place there were two traditions, one existing in the northern part of England and the other in the southern part. The former Legend credited the revival of Masonry in England to Edwin, King of Northumbria, in the 7th century, and the latter to Athelstan, King of England, in the 10th. There being little communication in those days between the two parts of the kingdom, the traditions remained distinct. But at some later period, not earlier than the middle of the 16th century, or the era of the Reformation,<sup>2</sup> the southern Freemasons became acquainted with the true Legend of the York Freemasons, and put that story into their own Legend, mixing up the two Edwin, either from want of knowledge, or more probably, from a dislike to give up the place they had of old given to Athelstan as the first head of Freemasonry in England.

Therefore, we come to the belief that the following are at least probable: That if there was an Assembly at York it was

<sup>1</sup> The same sort of error is probably the cause of making Edwin the son of Athelstan.

<sup>2</sup> We may fairly rely upon this period of time because the Halliwell poem, which has the older Legend, is evidently Roman Catholic in type, while the Dowland, and the manuscripts containing the later Legend, are Protestant, all mention of the Virgin, the Saints, and the Four Crowned Martyrs being left out.



called by Edwin, King of Northumbria, who revived Masonry in the northern part of England in the 7th century; and that its former proud position was restored by Athelstan in the 10th century, not by the holding of an Assembly at the city of York, but by his general favor of the arts, and especially of architecture, and by the charters of incorporation which he freely granted to various gilds or societies of workmen.

We are in the light of that belief now prepared to review and to digest the Legend of the Craft, not in the light of a series of absurd fictions, as too many have been inclined to see it, but as history, told in quaint language, not always grammatical, and containing several errors in the order of events, misspelling of names, and confusion of persons, such mistakes as might be expected and indeed were common in manuscripts written in that uncultured age, and by the uneducated craftsmen to whom we owe these old writings.



## CHAPTER NINETEEN

### SUMMARY OF THE LEGEND OF THE CRAFT



THE Legend of the Craft, as it is given to us in what we have called the later manuscripts, that is to say, the Dowland and those that follow it, begins with a study of the seven liberal arts and sciences.<sup>1</sup> We have already shown that among the students of the same time with the legendists these seven arts and sciences were esteemed, in the courses of education, not so much as the foundation, but as the finished structure of all human learning. The Legend naturally had the very spirit of the age in which it was invented. But especially did the Freemasons refer to these sciences, and make a description of them, the preface as it were to the story that they were about to tell, because the principal science was geometry, and this they held to be the same thing as Freemasonry.

The close connection between geometry and architecture, as practiced by the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages, is well known. The secrets, which these Freemasons were supposed to have, were almost entirely in an application of the principles of the science of geometry to the art of building.

Then the Legend goes on to tell of some particulars about the children of Lamech. These details are said in the Legend to have been from the Book of Genesis, but were probably taken at second-hand from the *Polychronicon*, or Universal History of the monk Higden, of Chester. This part of the Legend, which is not otherwise connected with the Masonic story, appears to have been used for the sake of mentioning the pillars on which the sons of Lamech are said to have inscribed an account of the sciences which they had discovered, so that the knowledge of them

<sup>1</sup> The Halliwell or Regius poem differs from the later manuscripts in many particulars but agrees with them in giving a discussion of the arts and sciences.



might not be lost because of the destruction of the world which they feared.

This story of the inscribed pillars was a tradition of every people, told, with variations, by all historians and fully believed by the many. The legendists of Freemasonry got the account from Josephus, perhaps through Higden, but altered it to suit the spirit of their own tale.

Then we are told that Hermes found one of these pillars and was, from the information that it contained, enabled to restore the knowledge of the sciences, and especially of Freemasonry, to the world after the Flood. This was a tribute of the legendists to the universally accepted opinion of the ancients, who esteemed the "thrice great Hermes" as the mythical founder of all science and philosophy. We are next told that Nimrod, "the mighty hunter before the Lord," availed himself of the wisdom that had been recovered by Hermes. He was noted for his architectural works and first gave importance to the art of Freemasonry at the building of the Tower of Babel. The Legend credits Nimrod with forming the Freemasons into an organized body and he was the first who gave them a constitution or laws for their government. Freemasonry, according to the legendary story, was founded in Babylon, whence it passed over to the rest of the world.

All of this means simply a general belief existed in the historical opinion that Chaldea was the birthplace of knowledge and that the wise men of that country were the first teachers of Asia and Europe. Modern discoveries of the cuneiform (wedge-shaped) inscriptions show that the Masonic legendists had, at a guess, obtained a more correct idea of the true character of Nimrod than that which had been hitherto received, founded on the brief mention of him in Genesis and the low estimate of him in the *Antiquities* of Josephus.

Legends written by the monks had made Abraham living at the same time as Nimrod, and the Book of Genesis had described the visit of the patriarch and his wife to the land of Egypt. Combining these two stories, the idea was suggested to the legendists that Abraham had carried into Egypt the knowledge which he had received from the Chaldeans and had taught it to the inhabitants.



We find it is stated that Egypt was, after Babylonia, the place where the arts and sciences were first cultivated and from there they spread out to other countries. Among these arts and sciences, Geometry, which we have seen was always connected in the Masonic mind with architecture, held a prominent place. He who taught it to the Egyptians was typically known by the name of Euclid, because the old Freemasons were familiar with the fact that he was then esteemed, as he still is, the greatest of geometricians and almost the inventor of the science.

If we accept the reference to Euclid, not as a blundering mixing up of historical events, but rather as the telling of an idea in a symbolic style, we can not fairly class the legendary story of the condition of learning in Egypt as a pure and unadulterated fiction. It is an undoubted fact that Egypt was the source from whence science and learning flowed into Southern Europe and Western Asia. Neither can it be disputed that civilization had there grown and ripened long before Greece or Rome was known. Moreover, it is agreed that the ancient Mysteries<sup>1</sup> from which Freemasonry has borrowed, not its organization, but a part of its science of symbolism, received its birth in the land of the Nile, and that the Mysteries of Osiris and Isis were the beginning of all the mystical initiations which were celebrated in Asia and in Southern Europe. They have even been claimed, though perhaps incorrectly, as the origin of those in Gaul, in Britain, and in Scandinavia. By a rapid change, the Legend passes from the founding of Freemasonry or architecture (for it must be remembered that in the legends the two words meant the same thing) to its appearance in Judea, the "Land of Behest," where, under the favor and direction of King Solomon the Temple of Jerusalem was built. All that is said in this portion of the Legend purports to be taken from the Bible account of the same event and must have the same historical value.

<sup>1</sup> A word used among Freemasons with two distinct meanings: First, as in the above reference in the text, the ancient religious rites or ceremonies of initiation by which the elect were secretly taught in the most serious and exacting manner the meaning of life and death; and, second, the name is given to the early plays of a religious type staged and performed by the devout Craftsmen of the Middle Ages for the principal purpose of teaching the common people the Bible and its moral instructions. Very probably the most dramatic of our present three degrees is based upon or copied directly from what was many years ago used by the Freemasons of old to impress the public with the truth of immortality and the wisdom of right living.



In regard to the error made in the name and title of him who is now well known to Freemasons as Hiram Abif, a sufficient explanation has been given in a preceding chapter.

Then we have an account of the travels into various countries of these Freemasons or architects who built the Temple, there to get further ability and experience, and to spread the principles of their art. The careless use of the facts of history, so peculiar to that generally untaught age, has led the legendists to connect this spread of architecture among the various civilized countries of the world with the Tyrian and Jewish Freemasons; but the wanderings of that body of builders known as the "Traveling Freemasons" of the Middle Ages through all the kingdoms of Europe, and their labors in the building of the great houses and homes for the church, the cathedrals and the monasteries, and other public edifices are matters of historical record. Thus the historical idea is well preserved in the Legend of a body of artists who wandered over Europe, and were employed in the construction of public works of finest quality.

Following this we find the Legend tells of the coming of architecture into France, and the influence exerted upon it by Grecian architects, who brought with them into that kingdom the principles of Byzantine art. These are facts supported by history. The position given to France above Spain or Italy or Germany suggests to us that the Legend was either of French origin or was written under French control.

The story of the condition of Freemasonry or of architecture among the Britons in the time of St. Alban, or the 4th century, is simply a use in legendary style of the history of the bringing of the art of building into England. This apparently came about during the Roman control and by the "Collegia Artificum" or Roman Colleges of expert workmen and artistic architects who came with the soldiers when they defeated the forces of Hesperia, Gaul, and Britain, and made these countries colonies.

The decay of architecture in Britain after the Roman armies had left that country to defend their Empire from the attacks of the northern hosts of savages, was due to the fact that Britain was left in an unprotected state, and was soon engaged in wars with the Picts, the Danes, and other enemies. This is told in the Legend, and is its version of a historical fact.



Moreover, it is historically true that in the 7th century peace was restored to the northern parts of the island. At that time Edwin, King of Northumbria, of which the city of York was the capital, revived the arts of civilization, gave his special favor to architecture, and caused many public buildings, among others the Cathedral of York, to be built. All of this is told in the Legend, although by an error that has already been explained, Edwin, the Northumbrian king, was in the later Legend confused with the brother of Athelstan.

The second decline of architecture in England, because of the attacks of the Danes, and the civil as well as foreign wars which laid waste the kingdom until the reign of Athelstan, in the early part of the 10th century when entire peace was restored, is briefly mentioned in the Legend, therein agreeing with the history of that troubled period.

After peace was restored, the Legend records the revival of Freemasonry or architecture in the 10th century, under the reign of Athelstan, who called the Craft together and gave them a charter. We have already gone into this matter and shown that the story of the Legend has nothing unlikely about it and that it is easily to be reconciled with the facts of the history of that period. The two forms of the Legend we can fit nicely together by claiming that Edwin of Northumbria revived Masonry in an Assembly called by him at York, and that Athelstan restored its decayed prosperity by his public favor, and by charters which he gave to the Gilds or corporations of skilled workmen.

We may pass in this general way over the principal events told in this Legend of the Craft, and thus we free it from the charge of being a very childish story. This has been urged against it, even by some Masonic writers who have viewed it in a spirit of rude criticism. We find that its statements are not the fancies of a fertile maker of fictions nor mere guesses, but that, on the contrary, they really have a support in what was at the time accepted as real history, and whose force and credit can not, even now, be disproved or fairly denied.

Examined as it has here been by the tests of careful criticism, the Legend of the Craft is no longer to be deemed a fable or myth. It is a historical narrative related in the quaint language and in the peculiar spirit of the age when it was written.



After the revival of Freemasonry in the beginning of the 18th century, this Legend, for the most part misunderstood, served as a foundation on which were erected, first by Anderson and then by other writers who followed him, enlarged stories of the rise and progress of Freemasonry. In these repeated and expanded tales the symbolic ideas or the mythical suggestions of the ancient "Legend" were often spread out into statements for the most part of the nature of fables.

Such writers, though they were educated and even learned men, have introduced not so much any new legends, but rather theories founded on a legend. By these they have traced the origin and the progress of the institution in reports without historic force and sometimes contrary to historic truth.

We must admit that the method in which these theories have been prepared and presented with the support of what has seemed to be facts quoted from the records, has caused them to take, to some extent, the form of legends. As a means of separating them from the pure legends which existed before the 18th century, we prefer to call them theories.

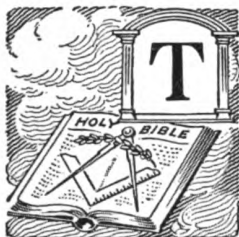
Of course their chief tendency has been, by the use of claims having little or no basis in fact, to confuse the true history of the Order. Yet they have secured so large a place in its literature and have exerted so much influence on modern Masonic ideas, that they must be reviewed and analyzed at length, in order that the reader may completely understand the legendary history of the institution. These theories, founded as they are on assumed traditions, form a part of that legendary history.

The theory of Dr. Anderson will be the first to claim our attention because it has the lead in order of appearance.



## CHAPTER TWENTY

### THE THEORY OF ANDERSON



THE Legend or theory of Dr. Anderson is detailed first in the 1723 edition of the *Book of Constitutions*. This book was edited by him and published in the year 1723, and was then more fully developed and enlarged in the later edition of the same work that appeared in 1738.

Anderson was acquainted with the more recent Legend of the Craft, and very freely quotes it from a manuscript or *Record of Freemasons, written in the reign of Edward IV.*, that is, toward the end of the 15th century. If Anderson's extracts from this manuscript are correct, it must be one of those writings that has been lost and not yet recovered. For, among some other events not mentioned in the manuscripts that are now within reach, he states that the charges and laws of the Freemasons had been seen and read by Henry VI. and his Council, and had been approved by them.

He does not appear to have met with any of the earlier manuscripts, such as those of Halliwell and Roberts, which contain the Legend in its older form. Certainly he makes no use of the Legend of Euclid, passing over the services of that geometrician lightly, as the later manuscripts do,<sup>1</sup> and not crediting to him the origin of the Order in Egypt. This latter theory is the special feature of the older Legend.

Out of the later Legend and from whatever manuscripts containing it to which he had access, Anderson has formed a Legend of his own. To this he has added many things of his own creation and given a more detailed story, if not a more correct one, than that in the older Legend of the Craft.

<sup>1</sup> Anderson has observed the true order of events and in the slight mention made of Euclid he has placed him in the time of "Ptolomeus, the son of Lagus, King of Egypt," 300 years B.C.



Anderson's Legend, or theory, of the rise and progress of Freemasonry, as it is contained in the first edition of the *Book of Constitutions*, was for a long time accepted by the Craft as a true history of the Order, and it has had a very striking influence in the framing of other theories on this subject which from time to time have been worked out by writers who have made exhaustive studies of the matter.

For the student, therefore, who is engaged in examining the legendary history of Freemasonry, this Andersonian Legend is of great importance. The Legend of the Craft in its pure form was very little known to the great body of Masonic writers and students until the manuscripts containing this story in its various forms were made common to the Masonic public by the labors of Halliwell, Cooke, and, above all, by Hughan and his earnest associates in the search among the remains of early Freemasonry. But the Legend of Anderson was within everybody's reach and well known to all. For a century and a half it was deemed an authentic history. Even at the present day it is accepted by some too trusting and not too well-informed members of the Craft as a true story of the rise and progress of Freemasonry.

We note that Anderson, in his history of the progress of Freemasonry, mindful of the French proverb, to "*commencer par la commencement*" (begin at the beginning), starts out by crediting to Adam a knowledge of Geometry as the foundation of Masonry and Architecture, words which throughout his Legend he uses as meaning the same thing.

Adam taught these arts to his sons, and Cain especially practiced them by building a city. Seth also was equally acquainted with them and taught them to his children. Thus the world before the Flood was according to this theory well acquainted with Freemasonry,<sup>1</sup> and erected many curious works until the time of Noah, who built the Ark by the principles of Geometry and the rules of the Craft.

Noah and his three sons, all Freemasons, brought with them to the new world the traditions and arts of the period before the Flood. Noah is therefore called the founder of Masonry in the

<sup>1</sup> Oliver accepted this theory of a Freemasonry before the Flood, and wrote several very learned and truly interesting works on the subject.



world after the Flood, and hence Anderson called a Freemason a "true Noachida" or Noachite.<sup>1</sup>

The descendants of Noah exercised their skill in Freemasonry in the attempted erection of the Tower of Babel, but were confounded in their speech and dispersed into various countries, whereby the knowledge of Freemasonry was lost.<sup>2</sup> It was, however, preserved in Shinar and Assyria, where Nimrod built many cities.

Here, there afterwards lived many priests and mathematicians under the name of Chaldees and Magi, who practiced Geometry or Freemasonry, and in that way the science and the art<sup>3</sup> were sent on to later ages and distant lands. Mizraim, the second son of Ham, carried Freemasonry into Egypt, where the overflowing of the banks of the Nile caused greater attention to Geometry and the study of landmarks and other measures. This brought Freemasonry much into esteem and use.

Freemasonry was taken into the Land of Canaan by the descendants of the youngest son of Ham, and into Europe, as Anderson supposes, by the children of Japhet, although we know nothing of their works.

The family of Shem also used the art of Freemasonry, and Abraham, the head of one branch, having thus obtained his knowledge of Geometry and the allied sciences, gave that information to the Egyptians and to his descendants, the Israelites. When, therefore, they made their exodus from Egypt the Israelites were "a whole kingdom of Masons," and while in the wilderness were often assembled by their Grand Master Moses into "a regular and general Lodge."

When they took possession of Canaan, the Israelites found the people were informed upon Freemasonry, which, however, the victors greatly improved, for the quality of the finest structures in Tyre and Sidon was overtaken by the wonders of the

<sup>1</sup> See Anderson's "Constitutions," 1738.

<sup>2</sup> This part of the Legend has been preserved in some rituals, wherein the candidate is said to come "from the lofty Tower of Babel, where language was confounded and Masonry lost," and to be proceeding "to the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite (the Temple of Solomon) where language was restored and Masonry found."

<sup>3</sup> By the science is meant Geometry, and by the art Architecture—a distinction preserved in the Middle Ages; and the combination of them into "Geometrical Masonry," constitute the Mystery of the Freemasons of that period.



Temple erected by King Solomon in Jerusalem. In the building of this edifice, Solomon was assisted by the Freemasons and carpenters of Hiram, King of Tyre, and especially by the King of Tyre's namesake Hiram or Hiram, to whom, in a note, Anderson gives the name of Hiram Abif, a name he has since retained among the Craft.<sup>1</sup>

Anderson gives in this Legend the first detailed account of the Temple of Solomon that is to be found in any Masonic work. It is, however, taken from that contained in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, with some added statements for which he was probably indebted to his own invention. But it has had a considerable influence upon other legends framed later, and especially upon all the rituals, and indeed upon all the modern ideas of Speculative Freemasons.<sup>2</sup>

After the construction of the Temple, the Freemasons who had been at work upon it dispersed into Syria, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Chaldea, Babylonia, Media, Persia, Arabia, Africa, Lesser Asia, Greece, and other parts of Europe. There they taught the art to many eminent persons, and kings, princes, and potentates became Grand Masters, each in his own country.

The Legend then passes on to Nebuchadnezzar, whom it calls a Grand Master, and asserts that he got many benefits in Freemasonry from the Jewish captives whom he brought to Babylon after he had looted Jerusalem and its Temple.

Afterwards Cyrus made Zerubbabel the leader of the Jews, who, being freed from their captivity, returned to Jerusalem and built the second Temple.

From Palestine, and after the building of the Temple, Freemasonry was carried into Greece, and arrived at its height dur-

<sup>1</sup> In the first edition of this Legend, Anderson does not mention the death of Hiram Abif during the building of the Temple. He speaks of it, however, in the second edition of the "Constitutions" published fifteen years afterward. But this does not absolutely prove that he was at the time unacquainted with the tradition, but he may have thought it too private for public record, for he says, in the very place where he should have referred to it, that he has left "what must not and cannot be communicated in writing."

<sup>2</sup> The peculiar details of the doctrine of Anderson have not been always respected. For instance, it is a very common opinion among the Craft at this day, that there was a Master Mason's Lodge at the Temple, over which Solomon presided as Master and the two Hirams as Wardens, a theory which is not supported by Anderson, who says that King Solomon was Grand Master of the Lodge at Jerusalem, King Hiram Grand Master of that at Tyre, and Hiram Abif Master of Work. "Constitutions," 1st edition, p. 14.



ing the Jewish captivity, and in the time of Thales Milesius, the philosopher, and his pupil, Pythagoras, who was the author of the 47th Proposition of Euclid, which "is the foundation of all Masonry." Pythagoras traveled into Egypt and Babylon, and gained much information from the priests and the Magi, which he taught in Greece and Italy on his return.<sup>1</sup>

The Legend now speaks, indirectly as it were, of the progress of Masonry in Asia Minor, and of the labors of Euclid in Egypt, in the orderly digestion of Geometry into a science.

Then it dwells upon the great improvement of Freemasonry in Greece, whose Freemasons arrived at the same degree of skill and power as their teachers the Asiatics and Egyptians.

From Sicily, from Greece, from Egypt and Asia, Freemasonry was brought to Rome. This great city soon became the center of learning, and it spread the knowledge of Freemasonry among the nations which it held captive and governed.

The Emperor Augustus became the Grand Master of the Lodge at Rome, and established the Augustan style of architecture. During the prosperous condition of the Roman Empire, Freemasonry was carefully taught to the remotest regions of the world, and a Lodge erected in almost every place that Roman soldiers controlled.

But when the Empire declined in power, when the Roman armies were drawn away from Britain, the Angles and lower Saxons, who had been invited by the ancient Britons to come over and help them against the Scots and Picts, at length subdued the southern part of England, where Freemasonry had been taught by the Romans, and the art then fell into decay.

The Anglo-Saxons recovered their freedom in the 8th century and Freemasonry was revived. At the desire of the Saxon kings, Charles Martel, King of France, sent over several expert craftsmen, so that Gothic architecture was again encouraged during the Heptarchy, or the period of the seven kingdoms.

The many attacks from the Danes caused the numerous records to be destroyed, but did not to any great extent interfere with the work, although the methods used by the Roman builders were lost.

<sup>1</sup> Probably this part of the Andersonian Legend gave rise to a similar claim made in that much discussed production known as the Leland MS.



But when war ended and peace was declared by the Norman victory, Gothic Freemasonry was restored and encouraged by William the Conqueror and his son William Rufus, who built Westminster Hall at London. From that time onward in spite of the later wars, and the quarrels of the Barons, Masonry never ceased to hold its position in England. In the year 1362, Edward III. had an officer called the King's Freemason, or General Surveyor of Buildings, whose name was Henry Yvele,<sup>1</sup> and who erected many public works.

Anderson now repeats the Legend of the Craft, with the story of Athelstan and his son Edwin, taking it with a probable change of the language from a record of Freemasons, which he says was written in the reign of Edward IV. This record adds, as he says, that the charges and laws therein contained had been seen and approved by Henry VI. and the lords of his council, who must therefore, to enable them to make such a review, have been closely in touch or actually incorporated with the Freemasons. Because of this fact, the act passed by Parliament when the King was a child, forbidding the yearly congregations or communications of Freemasons in their General Assemblies, was never enforced after the King had arrived at manhood, and had studied over the regulations in that old record.

The kings of Scotland also encouraged Freemasonry from the earliest times down to the union of the crowns, and granted to the Scottish Freemasons the right of having a fixed Grand Master and Grand Warden.<sup>2</sup>

Queen Elizabeth did not favor Freemasonry, and she neglected it during her whole reign. She even sent a commission to York to break up the Annual Assembly. The members of the commission, being admitted into the Lodge, made on their return so favorable a report to the Queen, of the Fraternity, that she no longer opposed the Freemasons. However, she merely endured them and gave no active help.

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced "ce-veel," and sometimes written "Yevele."

<sup>2</sup> It would appear from this claim that Anderson knew and believed in the ancient right of the St. Clairs of Roslin to the hereditary Grand Mastership of Scotland, a point that has been disputed as to its origin in an honor coming direct from a Scottish king but even when so denied or doubted it is usually admitted as being accepted by the old Operative Freemasons. See the Mackey-Hughan-Hawkins "Encyclopædia of Freemasonry" for thorough discussion.



Her successor, James I., was a patron of Freemasonry, and greatly revived the art. He restored the Roman architecture, employing Inigo Jones as his architect, under whom was Nicholas Stone as his Master Mason.

Charles I. was also a Freemason, and favored the art whose successful progress was unhappily held back by the civil wars and the death of the king.

After the return of the royal family, Freemasonry was again revived by Charles II., who was a great help to the Craftsmen, and therefore is supposed to have been a Freemason.

In the reign of James II., Freemasonry not being duly cultivated, the London Lodges "much dwindled into ignorance."

On the coming of William to the throne, that king "who by most is reckoned as a Freemason," greatly favored the art, and showed himself a patron of Freemasonry.

William's good example was followed by Queen Anne. She ordered fifty new churches to be erected in London and its suburbs. This help was also continued by George I., her successor.

Then with a reference to the opinion that the religious and military Orders of Knighthood in the Middle Ages had taken many of their solemn customs from the Freemasons,<sup>1</sup> the Legend here ends.

The study of this Legend will show that it is in fact, except in the latter portions, which are somewhat historical, only a general survey of the later Legend of the Craft, including all that is said there and adding other claims, partly taken from history and partly, perhaps, from the author's invention.

The 1738 or second edition of the *Constitutions* goes more fully over the same ground, but is written in the form rather of a history than of a legend. A review of it is not, therefore, necessary or suitable in this part of the present work which treats only of the Legends of the Order.

This second edition, 1738, of Anderson's work, has many things which will be cast aside as worthless by the skeptical

<sup>1</sup> We shall in the proper place discuss the claim that the Chevalier Ramsay greatly developed this brief allusion by Anderson, and out of it worked up his theory of the Templar origin of Freemasonry.

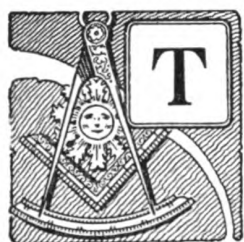


student of Masonic history, and many, which, if not at once denied, he will demand proof to support them. But with all its errors, this work of Anderson has a store of facts that makes it interesting and helpful. The author has our esteem and thanks for his labors in behalf of the literature of Freemasonry at so early a period after its revival in 1717.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### THE THEORY OF PRESTON



THE Legend given by Preston<sup>1</sup> in his *Illustrations of Masonry* details the origin and early progress of the institution. It is more valuable and more interesting than that of Anderson, because it is more compact, and although founded also on the Legend of the Craft, it treats each detail with a show of historical accuracy that almost removes from the story the legendary character which, after all, really belongs to it.

Accepting the Legend of the Craft as the basis of his story, Preston rejects, or at least leaves out, all the earlier part of it, and begins with the supposed bringing of Freemasonry into England.

Commencing with a reference to the Druids,<sup>2</sup> who, he says, it has been suggested, derived their system of government from Pythagoras, he thinks that there is no doubt that the science of Freemasonry was not unknown to them. Yet he does not say that there was an affinity between their rites and those of the Freemasons, which, as an open question, he leaves everyone to judge for himself.

Freemasonry, according to this theory, was certainly first brought into England at the time of its conquest by Julius Cæsar, who, with several of the Roman generals that succeeded him, were patrons and protectors of the Craft.

The Freemasons were engaged in the building of walls, forts, bridges, cities, temples, and other stately edifices, and their Lodges or Conventions were regularly held.

<sup>1</sup> William Preston, W. M., in 1774, of the Lodge of Antiquity, No. 1, London, and afterwards Deputy Grand Secretary. His "*Illustrations of Masonry*" is a monitorial work published in 1772 and has been a popular handbook for ritualists ever since.

<sup>2</sup> The priestly class of lawgivers among the Britons and having ceremonies curiously akin to those of Freemasonry.



Hindered for years by the wars which broke out between the Romans and the natives, Freemasonry was at length revived in the time of the Emperor Carausius. He, having shaken off the Roman yoke, sought to improve his country in the civil arts, and brought into his country the best workmen and artificers from all parts. Among the first class of his favorites he placed the Freemasons, for whose tenets he professed the highest esteem, and appointed his steward, Albanus, the superintendent of their Assemblies. He gave them a charter, and ordered Albanus to preside over them in person as Grand Master. He assisted in the initiation of many persons into the mysteries of the Order.

In 680 some expert brethren arrived from France and formed a Lodge under the direction of Bennet, Abbot of Wirral. He was soon afterward appointed by Kenred, King of Mercia, inspector of the Lodges and general superintendent of the Freemasons.

Freemasonry was in a low state during the Heptarchy, but in 856 it revived under St. Swithin, who was employed by Ethelwolf, the Saxon king, to repair church buildings. It gradually improved until the reign of Alfred, its zealous protector who maintained a number of workmen in repairing the damage done by the Danes. In the reign of Edward, his successor, the Freemasons continued to hold their Lodges under the sanction of Ethred, his sister's husband, and Ethelward, his brother.

Athelstan succeeded his father in 924 and appointed his brother Edwin patron of Masonry. The latter procured a Charter from Athelstan for the Freemasons to meet annually in communication at York. There the first Grand Lodge of England was formed in 926, at which Edwin presided as Grand Master. The Legend of the Craft, in reference to the collection of old writings, is here repeated. At Edwin's death, Athelstan undertook in person the direction of the Lodges, and under his control the art of Freemasonry was taught and practiced in peace and without fear.

On the death of Athelstan, the Freemasons dispersed and were in a very unsettled state until the reign of Edgar, in 960, when they were again called together by St. Dunstan, but this help was not lasting. Fifty years after Edgar's death Freemasonry remained in a low state, but revived in 1041 by the favor of



Edward the Confessor, who appointed Leofric, Earl of Coventry, to superintend the Craft.

William the Conqueror, becoming king in 1066, appointed Gundulph, Bishop of Rochester, and Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, joint patrons of the Freemasons. The labors of the Fraternity were employed, during the reign of William Rufus, in the erection of various buildings.

The Lodges continued to assemble under Henry I. and Stephen. In the reign of the latter, Gilbert de Clare, Marquis of Pembroke, presided over the Lodges.

In the reign of Henry II., the Grand Master of the Knights Templar employed the Craft in 1135 in building their Temple. Freemasonry had the favor of this Order to 1199, when John came to the throne and Peter de Colechurch was appointed Grand Master. Peter de Rupibus succeeded him, and Freemasonry continued to flourish during this and the following reign.

Preston's tradition, or his theory founded on legends, may be considered as ending here. The rest of his work assumes a purely historical form, although many of his statements need the support of other authorities. At present, before leaving Preston's theory, a few comments are required.

As to the Legend of Carausius, said by Preston to be the patron of the British Craft in the latter part of the 3d century, it was first made known to the Fraternity by Dr. Anderson in the 2d edition of his *Constitutions*. He says that the tradition is in all the old Constitutions and was firmly believed by the old English Freemasons. The fact is that it is in none of the old records. They speak only of a king who favored St. Alban and who made him the Steward of his Household and his Master of Works. Anderson named this king Carausius, forgetting that the Saint was martyred the same year that the king came to the throne. Strangely enough, Anderson had made a special study of royal successions.

Preston appears to have borrowed the Legend from Anderson, increasing the details, adding those particulars in a style which the compilers of Masonic as well as monastic legends have always thought proper to use.

The arrival of French Freemasons in England toward the end of the 7th century, brought thither by the Abbot Bennet or



Benedict, which is recorded by Preston, is a historical fact. Paul Lacroix, in his book *The Arts in the Middle Ages*, says that England from the 7th century had called to it the best workmen among the French Freemasons. The Venerable Bede, who was living in that period, says that the famous Abbot Benedictus Biscopius (the Bennet of Preston) went over to France in 675 to engage workmen to build his church, and brought them over to England for that purpose.

Richard of Cirencester says that "Bennet collected Masons (coementarios) and all kinds of industrious artisans from Rome, Italy, France, and other countries where he could find them, and, bringing them to England, employed them in his works."

Preston is, however, in error as to the reign when this event occurred. Kenred, or rather Coenred, was not King of Mercia until 704, and the Abbot Benedict had died the year before. Our Masonic writers of the 18th century, like the earlier legendists, were very apt to get confused in their dates.

In regard to the Legend of the "weeping St. Swithin," credited by Preston with the revival of Masonry in the middle of the 9th century, it may be said that as to the Saint being a celebrated architect, the claim is supported by the Anglo-Saxon writers.

Roger of Wendover, followed by Matthew of Westminster, records his custom of personally superintending the workmen on any building, "that his presence might stimulate them to diligence in their labors."

It may be said of Preston that he improved upon Anderson in his method of treating the early progress of Freemasonry. However, his story has so many claims not yet proved to be facts, that his theory must, like that of Anderson, be still considered as founded on legends rather than on accredited history.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

### THE THEORY OF HUTCHINSON



THE theory advanced by Bro. William Hutchinson as to the origin and the progress of Freemasonry, in his treatise, first published in the year 1775 when the author was Worshipful Master of the Lodge of Concord, Barnard Castle, Durham, England, and entitled *The Spirit of Masonry*, is so strained and complex in what it sets forth, as to require, for a proper grasp of his views, not only a careful reading, but a thorough study of his book. This work received the approval of the Grand Lodge and has been everywhere admired ever since. We offer the reader a digest of the opinions on the rise and progress of the Order which were held by this learned brother.

Let it be said, by way of preface to this review, that however we may differ from the verdict of Hutchinson, he is entitled to our utmost respect for his scholarly ability. To the study of the history and the philosophy of Freemasonry he brought a fund of information because he had previously been engaged in examining the church records and other old relics of the province of Durham. Of all the Masonic writers of the 18th century, Hutchinson was undoubtedly the most learned. In spite of his great ability in the search and arrangement of facts, the theory that he has set up as to the origin of the Masonic institution is altogether too weak to hold its ground and indeed, in many items, discredited because of its absurd claims.

Among all the opinions held by Hutchinson concerning the origin of Freemasonry, the one most differing from accepted standards is that which denies its source and its connection, at any period, with an operative society. "It is our opinion," he says, "that Masons in the present state of Masonry were never a body of architects. . . . We ground a judgment of the



nature of our profession on our ceremonials and flatter ourselves every Mason will be convinced that they have no relation to building and architecture, but are emblematical and imply moral and spiritual and religious tenets."<sup>1</sup>

At another place, while admitting that there were in former times builders of cities, towers, temples, and fortifications, he doubts "that the artificers were formed into bodies ruled by their own proper laws and knowing mysteries and secrets which were kept from the world."<sup>2</sup>

Since he admits, as we will see hereafter, that Freemasonry existed at the Temple of Solomon, that it was there organized in what he calls the second stage of its progress, and that the builders of the edifice were Freemasons, one naturally imagines that Hutchinson would here meet an objection that cannot be got over by his theory, which entirely separates Freemasonry and Architecture. But he attempts to get around this difficulty by supposing that the principles of Freemasonry had, before the commencement of the undertaking, been taught by King Solomon to "the sages and religious men amongst his people,"<sup>3</sup> and that these "chosen ones of Solomon, as a pious and holy duty conducted the work." Their labors as builders were simply by chance. They were no more to be regarded by reason of this duty as architects by profession, than were Abel, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and David, because of the building of their altars, which were, like the Temple, works of piety and devotion.<sup>4</sup>

This theory, in which all connection between Operative and Speculative Freemasonry is completely cut away, and in which, in fact, the former is entirely cast aside, is peculiar to Hutchinson. No other writer, no matter to what source he may have credited the original rise of Speculative Freemasonry, has denied that there was some period in the history of its progress when it was more or less closely linked with the operative art. While, therefore, it is plain that the opinion of Hutchinson is against

<sup>1</sup>"Spirit of Masonry," lecture xiii, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup>"Spirit of Masonry," lecture x, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup>Hutchinson's language is here somewhat confused, but it would seem that this is the only logical meaning that can be given to what he says.

<sup>4</sup>"Spirit of Masonry," lecture x, p. 108.



that of all other Masonic writers, it is equally evident that it contradicts all the well-founded facts of history.

Besides these opinions concerning the non-operative character of the institution, Hutchinson has been scarcely less peculiar in his other views in respect to the rise and progress of Freemasonry and its relations to other societies of the olden times.

Hutchinson's theory may, indeed, be regarded as especially and entirely his own. It is, therefore, worthy of study and criticism, rather in reference to the novelty of his ideas than in respect to anything of great historical value in the claims that he has advanced.

A leading thought of Hutchinson in working out his theory is that Freemasonry in its progress from the earliest times to the present day has been divided into three stages, respectively represented by the three ancient Craft degrees.<sup>1</sup>

He does not give a very clear or satisfactory explanation of the reasons which led him to connect each of these "stages of progress" with one of the symbolical degrees. Indeed the connection appears to be based upon a rather fanciful theory.

The three stages into which he divides the progress of Masonry from its birth onwards to modern times are separated from each other, and distinctly marked by the code of religious morals and duties professed and taught by each. The first stage, which is represented by the Entered Apprentice degree, begins with Adam and the Garden of Eden and extends to the time of Moses.

The religious code taught in this first stage of Freemasonry was confined to a "knowledge of the God of Nature and that acceptable service wherewith He was well pleased."<sup>2</sup>

To Adam, while in a state of purity, this knowledge was given as well as that of all the science and learning which existed in the earliest ages of the world.

When our first parent fell, although he lost his innocence, he still retained the memory of all that he had been taught while in

<sup>1</sup> "It is known to the world, but more particularly to the brethren, that there are three degrees of Masons—Apprentices, Craftsmen, and Masters; their initiation, and the several advancements from the order of Apprentices, will necessarily lead us to observations in these distinct channels."—"Spirit of Masonry," lecture i, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> "Spirit of Masonry," lecture i, p. 6.



the Garden of Eden. This very recollection was, indeed, a part of the penalty Adam suffered for having disobeyed God.

However, it enabled him to teach his children the sciences which he had gained in Eden, and the knowledge that he had acquired of Nature and the God of Nature. These lessons were given by the children of Adam to their families as the cornerstone and foundation of Freemasonry, whose teachings at that early period consisted of a belief in the God of Nature and a knowledge of the sciences as they had been handed down by Adam to those who came after him. This system appears to have been very nearly the same as that afterwards called by Dr. Oliver the "Pure Freemasonry of Antiquity."

All of the descendants of Adam did not, however, retain this purity and simplicity of dogma. After the Flood, when mankind became separated, the lessons which had been taught by the fathers of old fell into confusion and neglect, and were misused by many peoples. Thus the service of the true God, which had been taught in the pure Freemasonry of the first men, was fouled by the worship of idols. These seceders from the pure Adamic Freemasonry formed institutions of their own, and declined as the first step downward from the simple worship of the God of Nature, into the errors of Sabaism, or the worship of the Sun, Moon, and Stars. They adopted symbols and allegories with which to secretly teach their false doctrines.

The earliest of these seceders were the Egyptians, whose priests hid the mysteries of their religion from the people by symbols and picture-writings that were to be known and read by none but the members of their own order. A similar system was adopted by the priests of Greece and Rome when they established their peculiar Mysteries. These examples of conveying truth by symbolic methods of teaching were wisely followed by the Freemasons for the purpose of concealing their own mysteries from all but the initiated.

From this we naturally conclude, although Hutchinson does not expressly say so, that according to his theory Freemasonry was at that early period merely a religious profession "whose principles, maxims, language, learning, and religion were derived from Eden, from the patriarchs, and from the sages of the East," and that the symbolism which now forms so essential an element of



the system was not an original feature of it, but was borrowed, at a later period, from the mystical and religious associations of the pagans.<sup>1</sup>

Such, according to the theory of Hutchinson, was the "first stage" in the progress of Freemasonry represented by the Entered Apprentice degree. This was simply a belief in and a worship of the true God as the doctrine was taught by Adam and the patriarchs. It was a system of religious principles, with few rites and ceremonies and fewer symbols.

The second stage in the progress of Freemasonry Hutchinson supposes to be represented by the Fellow Craft degree, commencing at the time of Moses and extending through the whole period of the Jewish history to the coming of Christianity. According to the theory of Hutchinson, the Jewish lawgiver was, of course, in possession of the pure Freemasonry of the patriarchs which constituted the first stage of the institution, but was enabled to extend its morals and beliefs because of the instructions in relation to God and the duties of man which had been personally revealed to him. In other words, Freemasonry in its first stage was universal in its religious teachings, requiring only a belief in the God of Nature as he had been revealed to Adam and his next of kin, but in the second stage, as first taught by Moses, that unlimited freedom of belief was exchanged for one in the Deity as He had made himself known on Mount Sinai. That is to say, the second or Mosaic stage of Freemasonry became Jewish in its profession.

But in another respect Freemasonry in its second stage assumed a different form from that which had marked it at the beginning. Moses, from his peculiar education, was well acquainted with the rites, the ceremonies, the picture alphabet, and the other symbols used by the Egyptian priesthood. Many of these he used in Freemasonry. Thus began that system, which, coming originally from the Egyptians and added to by the Druids, the Essenes, the Pythagoreans, and other mystical associations, at

<sup>1</sup> George Grote, in his "History of Greece," mentions the hypothesis of an ancient and highly instructed body of priests having their origin either in Egypt or the East, who gave to the rude and barbarous Greeks religious, physical, and historical knowledge under the veil of symbols. The same tendency of thought was thus suggested to the Masonic writer and to the historian of Greece, but each has used it differently—one to the history of the pagan nations, the other to that of Freemasonry.



last was developed into that science of symbolism which now forms so important and essential a feature of modern Freemasonry.

A third change in the form of Freemasonry took place in its Mosaic or Jewish stage. This was the introduction of the operative art of building among its disciples. Instances of this occurred in the days of Moses, when Aholiab, Bezaleel, and other Freemasons were engaged in the construction of the Tabernacle, and afterwards in the time of Solomon, when that king occupied his Freemasons in building the Temple.

However, as has already been shown in this chapter, Hutchinson does not conclude from these facts that Freemasonry was ever connected in its origin with "builders, architects, or mechanics." The business of these Freemasons as builders was an accident, and did not at all change or take the place they had as members of a purely speculative association.

But it may be as well to give at this point, in his own words, an explanation of the manner in which the Freemasons became on certain occasions builders, and whence arose in modern times the mistaken idea that the Masonic profession consisted of architects.<sup>1</sup>

"I presume," he says, "that the name of Mason in this society doth not denote that the rise or origin of such society was solely from builders, architects, or mechanics; at the times in which Moses ordained the setting up of the sanctuary, and when Solomon was about to build the Temple at Jerusalem, they selected from out of the people those men who were enlightened with the true faith, and, being full of wisdom and religious fervor, were found proper to conduct these works of piety. It was on those occasions that our predecessors appeared to the world as architects and were formed into a body, under salutary rules, for the government of those who were employed in these great works, since which period builders have adopted the name of Masons, as an honorary distinction and title to their profession. I am induced to believe the name of Mason has its derivation from a language in which it implies some indication or distinction of

<sup>1</sup> In a later lecture (xiii) Hutchinson tries by a historical argument to show that the gild of Freemasons, chartered in the reign of Henry V., and the laws concerning "congregations and confederacies of Masons," passed in the succeeding reign, had no reference whatever to the speculative society.



the nature of the society, and that it has not its relation to architects." <sup>1</sup>

Freemasonry was not organized at the Temple of Solomon, as is believed by those who adopt the Temple theory, but yet that building occupies, according to the views of Hutchinson, an important place in the history of the institution. It was erected during the second stage of the progress of Freemasonry, not as we must infer from the language of our author by the pagan operatives of Tyre, but solely by Israelitish Freemasons; or if assisted by any, it was only by converts, who on or before their initiation had accepted the Jewish faith.

The language of Hutchinson is on this point not clear, yet we think that it admits only of the understanding which has been given. He says: "As the sons of Aaron alone were admitted to the holy office and to the sacrificial rites, so none but devotees were admitted to this labour (on the temple). On this stage we see those religious who had received the truth and the light of understanding as possessed by the first men, embodied as artificers and engaged in this holy work as architects." <sup>2</sup>

Still more direct is the following statement, made in a later part of the work: "Solomon was truly the executor of that plan which was revealed to him from above; he called forth the sages and religious men amongst his people to perform the work; he classed them according to their rank in their religious profession, as the priests of the Temple were stationed in the solemn rites and ceremonies instituted there. . . . The chosen ones of Solomon, as a pious and holy duty, conducted the work." <sup>3</sup>

Solomon did not, therefore, organize, as has very commonly been believed, a system of Freemasonry by the aid of his Tyrian workmen, and especially Hiram Abif, who has always been designated by the Craft as his "Chief Builder," but he practiced and taught his descendants the primitive Freemasonry derived from Adam and changed into its sectarian Jewish form by Moses. The Freemasonry of Solomon, like that of the great lawgiver of the Israelites, was essentially Jewish in its religious thought. It

<sup>1</sup> "Spirit of Masonry," lect. i, p. 2. In another place in this work the etymological ideas of Hutchinson and other writers will be duly investigated.

<sup>2</sup> "Spirit of Masonry," lecture vii, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., lecture x., p. 108.



but continued that second stage of Freemasonry which lasted, according to the Hutchinsonian theory, until the arrival of Christianity.

The wisdom and power of Solomon attracted the attention of the neighboring nations, and the splendor of the edifice which he had erected extended his fame and won the admiration of the most distant parts of the world, so that his name and his artificers became the wonder of mankind, and the works of the latter excited their imitation. Hence the Freemasons of Solomon were induced to travel from Jerusalem into various lands, where they superintended the architectural labors of other princes, converted infidels, initiated foreign brethren into their mysteries, and thus extended the order over the distant quarters of the known world.<sup>1</sup>

We see that according to the theory of Hutchinson, King Solomon, although not the founder of Freemasonry at the Temple and not our first Grand Master, as he has been called, was the first to spread abroad the association into foreign countries. Until his time it had been confined to the Jewish descendants of the patriarchs.

The next or third stage of the progress of Freemasonry, represented by the Master's degree, begun at the coming of Christianity. As Hutchinson in his description of the two preceding progressive classes of Freemasons had credited to the first, as represented by the Apprentices, only the knowledge of the God of Nature as it prevailed in the earliest ages of the world, and to the second, as represented by the Fellow Crafts, the further knowledge of God as revealed in the Mosaic mission, so to this third stage, as represented by Master Masons, he had assigned the complete and perfect knowledge of God as revealed in the Christian rule.

Freemasonry is thus made by him to assume in this third stage of its growth a purely Christian character.

The introduction of rites and ceremonies under the Jewish law, which had been derived from the neighboring heathen nations, had clouded and blotted the service of God. Therefore it befouled the second stage of Freemasonry as founded by Moses and fol-

<sup>1</sup> We give in this paragraph the very language of Hutchinson. However mythical the statements therein contained may be deemed by the iconoclasts, there can be no doubt that they were accepted by the learned author as undeniably historical.



lowed by Solomon. God, seeing the ruin which was overcoming mankind by this abuse of His ordinances and laws, devised a new plan for saving His creatures from the errors into which they had fallen. And this scheme was shown in the Third or Master's stage in the progressive course of Freemasonry.

The Master's degree is in this theory exclusively a Christian invention. The Legend has a purely Christian meaning, and the allegory of Hiram Abif is made to refer to the death or abolition of the Jewish law and the founding of a new order of things under Jesus Christ.

A few extracts from the discussion by Hutchinson will place this theory very clearly before the reader.<sup>1</sup>

The death and burial of the Master Builder, and these causing the loss of the true Word, are thus applied to the Christian dispensation. "Piety, which had planned the Temple at Jerusalem, was expunged.<sup>2</sup> The reverence and adoration due to the Divinity *was buried in the filth and rubbish* of the world.<sup>3</sup> Persecution had dispersed the few who retained their obedience,<sup>4</sup> and the name of the true God was almost lost and forgotten among men.<sup>5</sup>

"In this situation it might well be said 'That the guide to Heaven was lost and the Master of the works of righteousness was smitten.'"<sup>6</sup>

Again, "True religion was fled. 'Those who sought her through the wisdom of the ancients *were not able to raise her; she eluded the grasp, and their polluted hands were stretched forth in vain for her restoration.*'"<sup>7</sup>

Finally he explains the allegory of the Third Degree as directly referring to Christ, in the following words: "The great Father of All, commiserating the miseries of the world, sent His only

<sup>1</sup> They are taken from "Spirit of Masonry," lecture ix.

<sup>2</sup> The Master is slain.

<sup>3</sup> Burial and concealment in the rubbish of the Temple first, and then interment in an out-of-the-way grave.

<sup>4</sup> The confusion and dismay of the Craft.

<sup>5</sup> The Master's word is lost.

<sup>6</sup> In the 18th century it was supposed, by an incorrect translation of the Hebrew, that the substitute word signified "The Master is smitten." Dr. Oliver adopted that meaning of it.

<sup>7</sup> By "the wisdom of the ancients" is meant the two preceding stages of Freemasonry represented, as we have seen, by the Apprentices and the Fellow Craft. In the allegory of Hiram, the knowledge of each of these degrees is unsuccessfully applied to effect the raising.



Son, who was innocence<sup>1</sup> itself, to teach the doctrine of salvation, by whom *man was raised* from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness; from the tomb of corruption unto the chambers of hope; from the darkness of despair to the celestial beams of faith." And finally, that there may be no doubt of his theory that the Third Degree was altogether Christian in its origin and design, he explicitly says: "Thus the Master Mason represents a man under the Christian doctrine saved from the grave of iniquity and raised to the faith of salvation. As the great testimonial that we are risen from the state of corruption, we bear the emblem of the Holy Trinity as the insignia of our vows and of the origin of the Master's order."<sup>2</sup>

The Third or Master's degree made Christian in type, that is the meaning of its symbols referring to Christ and to Christian dogmas, is not peculiar to, nor original with, Hutchinson. It was the accepted belief of almost all the authorities of his time, and several of the rituals of the 18th century contain plain traces of it. It was not, indeed, until the rewriting of the lectures by Dr. Samuel Hemming, in 1813,<sup>3</sup> that nearly all the references in them to Christianity were taken out. Even as late as the middle of the 19th century, Dr. Oliver had clearly pointed out that if he had not been fully convinced that Freemasonry is a system of Christian ethics — that it gives its aid to point the way to the Grand Lodge above, through the Cross of Christ — he should never have been found among the number of its advocates.<sup>4</sup>

Notwithstanding that the Grand Lodge of England had authoritatively declared in the year 1723 that Masonry required a belief only in that religion in which all men agree,<sup>5</sup> the tendency among all our early writers after the revival of 1717 was to Christianize the institution.

An understanding of the symbols of Freemasonry from a Christian point of view was, therefore, at the period when Hutch-

<sup>1</sup> Acacia. The Greek word *akakia* means innocence. Hence in the succeeding paragraph he calls Freemasons "true Acacians."

<sup>2</sup> "Spirit of Masonry," lecture ix, p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Hemming was W. M. of the Lodge of Reconciliation, formed in 1813 by the United Grand Lodge of England to bring about a uniform ritualistic work drawn from "Modern" and "Ancient" sources.

<sup>4</sup> "Antiquities of Masonry," chapter vi, p. 166, note.

<sup>5</sup> "Book of Constitutions," 1st edition, "Charges of a Freemason," I.

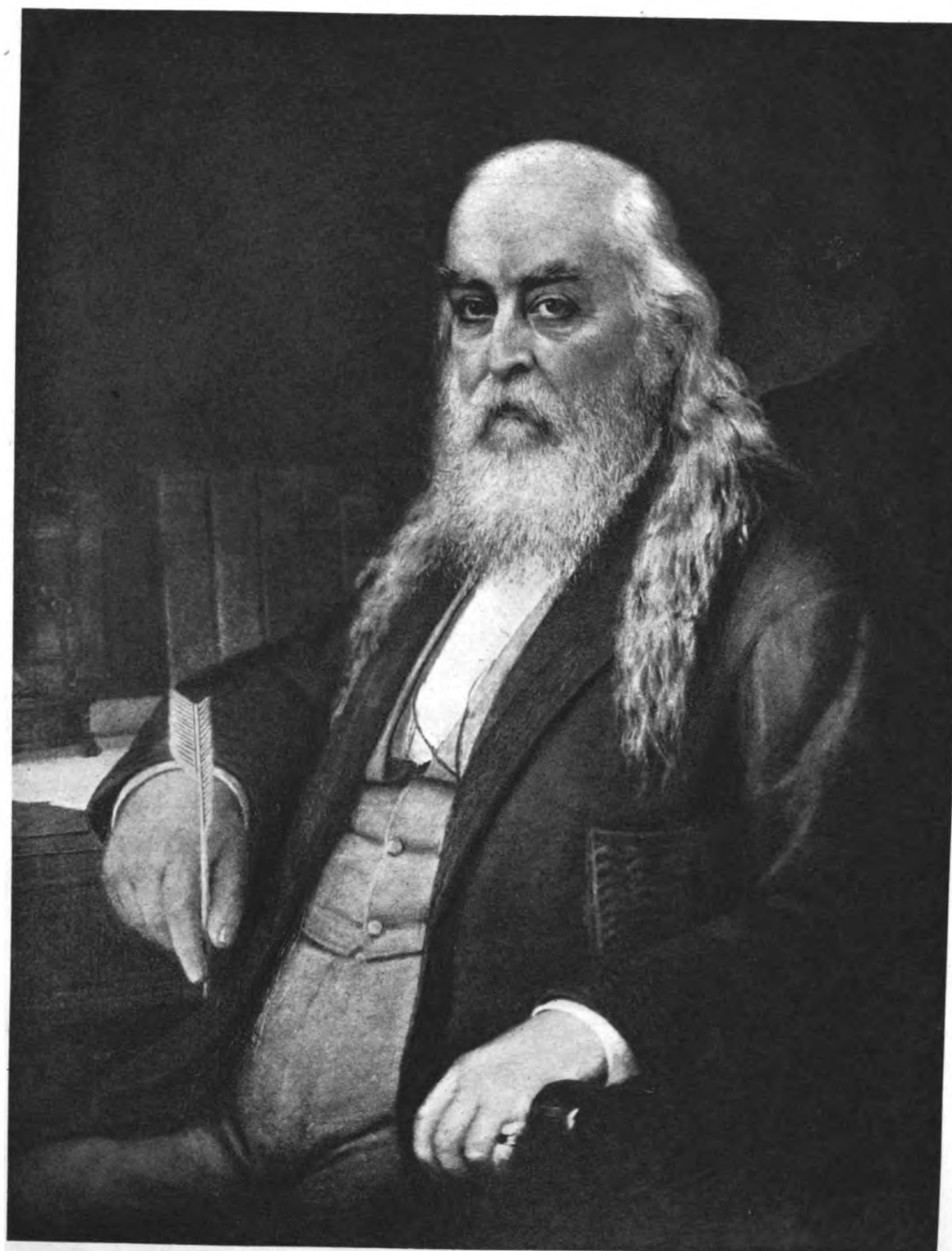


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inson advanced his theory, neither new to the Craft nor belonging entirely to him. The peculiarity and novelty of his beliefs were not in its Christian explanation of the symbols, but in the view that he has taken of the origin and historical value of the Legend of the Third Degree.

At least from the time of Anderson and Desaguliers, the Legend of Hiram Abif had been accepted by the Craft as a historical statement of an event that had actually occurred. Even the most skeptical writers of the present day receive it as a myth which possibly has been founded upon events that have been misplaced in their passage down the stream of tradition.

Neither of these views appears to have been entertained by Hutchinson. We look in vain throughout his work for any reference to the Legend as connected with Hiram Abif. In his lecture on "The Temple at Jerusalem," he gives the details of the labors of Solomon in the construction of that edifice, but the name of Hiram does not once occur, except in the extracts that he makes from the Book of Kings in the Bible and from the *Antiquities* of Josephus. Indeed, we must infer that he did not recognize Hiram Abif as a Freemason, for he expressly says that all the Masons at the Temple were Israelites and believers in the Jewish faith.

In a later lecture on "The Secrecy of Masons," he, in fact, undervalues Hiram Abif as an architect, and says that he does not doubt that "Hiram's knowledge was in the business of a statuary and painter, and that he made graven images of stone and wood and molten images in metals," thus placing him in a subordinate position and completely ignoring the rank given to him in all the Masonic rituals as the equal and associate of Solomon and as being the Master Builder of the Temple.<sup>1</sup>

There is nowhere to be found in the work of Hutchinson any reference, however distant, to what happened at the death and raising of the "Widow's Son." He must have been acquainted with the Legend because it was preserved and taught in the Lodges that he visited. But he speaks, in the most general terms, of the Third Degree as symbolizing the decline and death

<sup>1</sup> Hutchinson has here ventured an opinion that is far from being accepted by his successors. See the chapter in this work on "The Legend of Hiram Abif," where the place and the power of this celebrated artist are critically examined at some length.



of religion and the moral resurrection of man in the new or Christian doctrine.

If he believed in the truth of his own theory — and we are bound to suppose that he did — then he could not but have looked upon the details of the Master's legend as absolutely false for the Legend and his theory can in no way be reconciled.

Assuming that we rightly understand the message of Hutchinson, which it must be admitted is sometimes confused and the ideas are not plainly presented, he denies the existence of the Third Degree at the Temple.

That edifice was built, according to his theory, within the period of the second stage of the progress of Freemasonry. Now, that stage, which was begun by Moses, was represented by the Fellow Craft's degree. It was not until the coming of Christ that the Master's degree with its rites and ceremonies came into existence in the third stage of the progress of Freemasonry which was represented by that degree. Indeed, in the following passage he very clearly makes that statement:

"The ceremonies now known to Masons prove that the testimonials and insignia of the Master's order, in the present state of Masonry, *were devised within the ages of Christianity*; and we are confident there are not any records in being, in any nation or in any language, which can show them to be pertinent to any other system or give them greater antiquity."<sup>1</sup>

We can not explain this language with any respect for consistency and for the meaning of the words except by adopting the following explanation of the Hutchinsonian theory. At the building of the Temple, the Freemasonry then prevailing, which was the second or Fellow Craft's stage, was merely a system of religious ethics in which the doctrines of the Jewish faith, as revealed to Moses, had been united to the simple creed of the Patriarchs which was the first or Apprentice's stage of the institution. There was at that time no knowledge of the Legend of Hiram Abif which was a myth brought forward later on in the Third or Master's stage of the progress of the Order. It was not until after the coming of Jesus Christ, "within the ages of Christianity," that

<sup>1</sup> "Spirit of Masonry," lecture x, p. 1062. Mackey held it to be "passing strange" that a man of Hutchinson's learning should, as in this passage, have appeared to overlook the mythical character of the ancient Mysteries.



the death and raising of the Master Builder was planned as a mythical symbol to form what Hutchinson calls "the testimonials and insignia of the Master's order."

The myth or legend thus made was to be used as a symbol of the change which took place in the religious system of Masonry when the Third stage of its progress was brought about by the invention of the Master's degree.

Here again Hutchinson differs from all the writers before him or who have followed him. The standard belief, the orthodox doctrine, of all those who have given a Christian meaning to the Legend of the Third Degree is that it is the story of events which actually occurred at the building of the Temple of Solomon. That it was afterward, on the coming of Christianity, adopted as a symbol whereby the death and raising of Hiram Abif were considered as a type of the sufferings and death, the resurrection and ascension, of Christ.

No words of Hutchinson give expression to any such idea. With him the Legend of Hiram the Builder is simply an allegory, invented at a much later period than that in which the events it details are supposed to have occurred, for the purpose of symbolizing the death and burial of the Jewish law with the Freemasonry which it had decayed and the bringing to life of this dead Freemasonry in a new and perfect form under the Christian order of things.

Such is the Hutchinsonian theory of the origin and progress of Freemasonry. It is *sui generis* — peculiar to Hutchinson — and has been advanced or maintained by no other Masonic writer before or since. It may be presented in a very few words:

1. Freemasonry was first taught by Adam, after the fall, to his descendants, and continued through the Patriarchal Age. It had a simple code of ethics, teaching only a belief in the God of Nature. That was the Freemasonry of the Entered Apprentice.

2. Then it was enlarged by Moses and confirmed by Solomon, and thus lasted until the time of Christ. To its expanded code of ethics was added a number of symbols taken from the Egyptian priesthood. Its religion was a belief in God as He had been revealed to the Jewish nation. That was the Freemasonry of the Fellow Craft.



3. The Freemasonry of this Second stage becoming valueless because of the decay of the Jewish law, it was therefore abolished, and the Third stage was established in its place. This Third stage was formed by the teachings of Christ, and the religion it sets forth is that which was revealed by Him. That is the Freemasonry of the Master Mason.

4. Therefore the three stages of Freemasonry present three forms of religion: first, the Patriarchal; second, the Jewish; third, the Christian.

Freemasonry, having thus reached its last stage of progress, has continued in this form to the present day. And now Hutchinson proceeds to advance his theory as to its introduction and growth in England. He had already accounted for its extension into other quarters of the world because of the spreading out and travels of King Solomon's Freemasons, after the completion of the Temple. He thinks that during the first stage of Freemasonry — the Patriarchal — its principles were taught and practiced by the Druids. They received them from the Phœnicians,<sup>1</sup> who visited England for trading purposes at a very remote time in the world's early history. The Second stage — the Jewish — was with its ceremonials introduced among them by the Masons of Solomon, after the building of the Temple, but at what precise period he can not tell. The third and perfect form, as developed in the Third stage, must have been adopted upon the conversion of the Druidical worshippers to Christianity, having been brought into England as we should suppose by the Christian missionaries who came from Rome into that country.

While Hutchinson denies that there was ever any connection between the Operative and the Speculative Freemasons, he admits that among the former there might have been a few of the latter. He accounts for this fact in the following manner:

After Christianity had become the popular religion of England, the officials of the faith employed themselves in founding religious houses and in building churches. From the duty of assisting in this pious work, no man of whatever rank or profession was freed. There was also a set of men called "holy werk folk," to whom were given in trust certain lands which they held be-

<sup>1</sup> Phœnicia was a country on the far eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and north of Palestine. The capital cities were Tyre and Sidon.



cause of repairing, building, or defending churches and tombs, for which labors they were released from all duties due to the lords of the land or from military services. These persons were stone-cutters and builders, and might, he thinks, have been Speculative Freemasons, and were probably selected from that body. "These men," he says, "come the nearest to a similitude of Solomon's Masons, and the title of Free and Accepted Masons, of any degree of architects we have gained any knowledge of." But he professes his ignorance whether their initiation was attended with peculiar ceremonies or by what laws they were regulated. That they had any connection with the Speculative Order, whose origin from Adam he had been tracing, is denied.

Lastly, he credits the moral teaching of the Freemasonry of the present day to the school of Pythagoras and to the Basilideans, a sect of Christians who flourished in the 2d century. For this opinion so far as it relates to Pythagoras he is indebted to the celebrated Leland manuscript of whose genuineness he had not the slightest doubt. These precepts and the Egyptian symbols, introduced by Moses with Jewish additions, are in his opinion the system of modern Freemasonry as it has been perfected by a Christian order and meaning applied to it.

Such is the theory of Hutchinson as to the origin and progress of Speculative Freemasonry. That it has been accepted as a whole by no other writer, is not surprising. Not only is it unsupported by the facts of history but is actually contradicted by every Masonic document known to us to be in existence.

This is, indeed, a mere body of myths, which are not clad with the slightest garment of probability.

Yet there are here and there some glimmerings of truth, such as the attempt to accurately give a real character to Hiram Abif, and there are the allusions to the "holy werk folk," as showing a connection between Operative and Speculative Freemasonry. This valuable suggestion, though not pushed far enough by Hutchinson, may afford a very helpful starting point for further studies to the searcher after historic truth in Freemasonry.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

### THE THEORY OF OLIVER



IN praise of the Rev. Dr. George Oliver<sup>1</sup> as a learned and fertile writer on Freemasonry, too much can not be said. His name must ever be *clarum et venerabile* (shining and honored) among the Craft. To the study of the history and the philosophy of the institution he brought a store of scholarly acquirements, and a familiarity with ancient and modern literature which had been possessed by no Masonic author who had preceded him. Even Hutchinson, who certainly occupied the central and most elevated point in the circle of Masonic students and investigators who flourished in the 18th century, must yield the palm for research to him whose knowledge of books seemed without limits.

With his many works on Freemasonry, of which it is difficult to specify the most important, the most learned, or the most interesting, Dr. Oliver raised the Masonic institution to a point of elevation which it had never before reached, and to which its most ardent admirers had never expected to promote it.

He loved it for its social aims, for he was genial in his inclination and in his habits, and he cherished its principles of brotherly love, for his heart was as large as his mind. But he taught that within its chain of union there was a fund of ethics and philosophy, and a beautiful science of symbolism by which its ethics were developed to the initiated. He awakened scholars to see the fact never before so completely demonstrated, that Speculative Freemasonry claimed and was entitled to a leading place among the systems of human philosophy.

<sup>1</sup> Brother Oliver was born in 1782, initiated by his father at 19, and died in 1867. He was Deputy Provincial Grand Master for Lincolnshire, England, and a Masonic author of great industry and having a pleasing style.



No longer could men say that Freemasonry was merely a club of good fellows. Oliver proved that it was a school of inquirers after truth. No longer could critics charge that its only design was the cultivation of kindly feelings and the enjoyment of good cheer. He showed plainly that Freemasonry was engaged in making known to its initiates the deep and difficult subjects in religion and philosophy in a method by which it surpassed every other human plan for teaching such knowledge.

But, notwithstanding this high praise, every word of which is merited by its subject, and not one word of which we would grudge or omit, it must be confessed that there were two defects in his character that materially affect the value of his authority as an historian.

One fault was, that as a clergyman of the Church of England he was controlled by that clerical association or comradeship which inclined him to make every opinion give way to the views of his own sect. Thus, he gave to every symbol, every myth, and every allegory, the explanation of a theologian rather than of a philosopher.

The other defect, a far more important one, was that he gave way to a belief on slight evidence, that led him to freely accept the errors of tradition as the truths of history. When reading one of his discussions, it is often difficult to separate the two elements. He so glosses the sober facts of history with the fanciful coloring of legendary lore that the reader finds himself entangled in a knotted net of authentic history intermixed with unsupported tradition, where he finds it impossible to clearly see the truths among the fables.

Of course, the canon or test of criticism, laid down by Voltaire, that all historical claim of certainty that does not amount to a mathematical proof is merely extreme probability, is far too strict. There are many facts that depend only on general testimony to which no more precise demonstration is applied, and which yet leave the strong impression of certainty on the mind.

Here, as in all other things, there is a happy medium — a measure of moderation — and it would have been well if Dr. Oliver had observed it. This he did not do. His theory is founded not simply on the Legend of the Craft, of which he takes but little account, but on little known legends and traditions taken by



him, in the course of his studious and varied reading, sometimes from Jewish authors and sometimes from unknown sources.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Oliver's theories as to the origin and progress of Freemasonry from a legendary point of view are so scattered in his various works that it is difficult to follow them in a logical order. This is especially the case with the legends that relate to the periods following the building of the Temple at Jerusalem. Up to that era, the theory is set forth in his *Antiquities of Freemasonry*. Upon the contents of this book we shall principally depend in this digest of Dr. Oliver's arguments. This work was, it is true, written in the earlier part of his life, and was his first addition to the literature of Freemasonry, but he did not in any of his later writings alter the opinions he then held. This work may therefore be considered, as far as it goes, as an accurate and fair showing of his theory.

Dr. Oliver's *Historical Landmarks*, the most learned and most interesting of his works, if we except, perhaps, his *History of Initiation*, will furnish many suggestions on what he has advanced in his *Antiquities*, but as it is mainly devoted to an inquiry into the origin and meaning of the symbols and allegories of Freemasonry, we can not obtain from its pages a good grasp of his theory.

Preston had introduced his history of Freemasonry by the claim that its foundations might be traced "from the commencement of the world." Dr. Oliver is not content with so remote an origin, but asserts on the authority of Masonic traditions that the science "existed before the creation of this globe, and was diffused amidst the numerous systems with which the grand empyreum (the highest heaven, a classical term for the skies) of universal space is furnished."<sup>2</sup>

But as he supposes that the other globes of the universe were inhabited long before the earth was peopled, and that these inhabitants must have possessed a system of ethics founded on the belief in God, which he claims is nothing else but Speculative

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Oliver divides the legends of Freemasonry into two classes. In neither of these classes does he admit there is anything beyond belief. He says that "many of them are founded in fact, and capable of unquestionable proof, whilst others are based on Jewish traditions, and consequently invested with probability, while they equally inculcate and enforce the most solemn and important truths."—"Historical Landmarks," vol. i, p. 399.

<sup>2</sup> "Antiquities," Period I, ch. ii, p. 26.



Freemasonry, we may regard this opinion as merely the same as saying that truth is eternal.

Passing by this "empyreal" or sky notion of his as a mere philosophical idea, let us begin with Oliver's theory of the world's origin of the science of Freemasonry.

While in the Garden of Eden, Adam was taught that science which is now termed Freemasonry.<sup>1</sup> After his fall, he lost the gift of inspiration, but certainly kept a recollection of those degrees of knowledge which are within the reach of human capacity, and among them that speculative science now known as Freemasonry.<sup>2</sup>

These, in the course of time, Adam taught to his family. Of these children, Seth and his descendants preserved and cultivated the principles of Freemasonry which had been received from Adam, but Cain and his people misused them and finally cast them aside. However, before this had occurred, the latter with some of his descendants reduced the knowledge he had received from Adam to practice and built a city which he called Hanoeh. The children of Lamech, the sixth in descent from Cain, also retained some faint remains of Freemasonry which they used for the benefit of mankind.

This is the way that Dr. Oliver tries to adjust the story of the children of Lamech, as detailed in the Legend of the Craft, with his theory which really puts Cain and all his descendants outside the boundary limits of the field of Freemasonry. The sons of Lamech were Freemasons but their Freemasonry had become impure.

Dr. Oliver makes the usual division of Freemasonry into Operative and Speculative. The former continued to be used by the Cainites after they had lost all claim upon the latter, and the first practical application of the art by them was in the building of the city of Hanoeh, or as it is called in Genesis, Enoeh.

Freemasonry was thus divided as to its history into two distinct streams, that of the Operative and that of the Speculative; the former was cultivated by the descendants of Cain, the latter by those of Seth. It does not, however, appear that the Operative branch was altogether neglected by the Sethites, but was

<sup>1</sup> Oliver, "Antiquities," Period I, ch. ii, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Oliver, "Antiquities," Period I, ch. ii, p. 40.



only made second to their Speculative science, while the latter was entirely neglected by the Cainites, who devoted themselves altogether to the Operative art. Finally, they gave up that and were lost in the general decline of their race, which led to their destruction in the Flood.

But the Speculative stream flowed on without a halt to the time of Noah. Oliver does not hesitate to say that Seth, "associating himself with the most virtuous men of his age, they formed lodges and discussed the great principles of Masonry," and were called by the people of their time the "Sons of Light."

Seth continued to preside over the Craft until the time of Enoch, when he appointed that patriarch to succeed him and become the Grand Superintendent.<sup>1</sup>

Enoch, as Grand Master, practiced Freemasonry with such effect that God was moved to make known to him some peculiar mysteries. Among these secrets was the sacred word that continues to this day to form an important part of Masonic speculation, and for the preservation of it from the coming destruction of the world he constructed an underground room where he concealed the sacred treasure. He also erected two pillars, one of brass and one of stone, on which he engraved the elements of the liberal sciences, including Freemasonry.<sup>2</sup> Enoch then resigned the government of the Craft to Lamech, who afterward gave it up to Noah, in whose hands it remained until the time of the Flood.

Such is Oliver's legendary story of the progress of Freemasonry from the Creation to the Flood. The Craft was at that time organized into Lodges and governed during that long period by only five Grand Masters — Adam, Seth, Enoch, Lamech, and Noah.

To the institution existing during the years before the Flood he gives the appropriate title of "Antediluvian Masonry," and also that of "Primitive Masonry."

<sup>1</sup> Anderson gives the leadership of the Craft after Seth in order to Enoch, Kainan, Mahala-leel, and then to Jared, whom Enoch followed. "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> But this Legend of the vault of Enoch was not known to the Freemasons of the Middle Ages. It forms, therefore, no part of the ritual of Ancient Craft Freemasonry. It is an invention of a later period, and is recognized only by the more modern degrees we find in our travels beyond the first few ceremonies of initiation. The form of the Legend as known to Anderson in 1722 was that Enoch erected pillars on which the science of Freemasonry was inscribed.



In the consideration of its character he is of the opinion that it had but few symbols or ceremonies, and was indeed nothing else but a system of morals or pure religion. The great object that it had in view was to preserve and cherish the promise of a Messiah, a coming Savior of the world.

During the revival of the world, after the passing away of the waters of the deluge, it was found that Enoch's pillar of brass had given way before the torrents of destruction. But, happily, the pillar of stone had been preserved. By this means the knowledge of the state of Freemasonry before the Flood was handed down to those who came afterwards.

Of the sons of Noah, all of whom had been taught the pure system of Freemasonry by their father, Shem and his people alone preserved it. Ham and Japhet having dispersed into Africa and Europe, their descendants became worshippers of idols and lost the true principles of Freemasonry, which consisted in a knowledge and reverence of the one true God. The followers of Japhet not only fell away from the worship of God and began the adoration of idols, but they broke down the form of Freemasonry by the establishment on its basis of a system of secret rites which are known in history as the "Mysteries."

This secession or departure of the children of Japhet from the true system which their father had received from Noah, has been called by Dr. Oliver "Spurious Freemasonry." That practiced by the descendants of Shem he styles "Pure Freemasonry."

Of these two divisions the Spurious Freemasons were more distinguished for their cultivation of the Operative Art, while the Pure Freemasons, although not entirely neglectful of Operative Masonry, particularly devoted themselves to the preservation of the truths of the Speculative science.

Shem handed the secrets of Pure Freemasonry to Abraham, through whose descendants they were taught to Moses, who had, however, been previously initiated into the Spurious or False Freemasonry of the Egyptians.

Freemasonry, which had suffered a decay during the captivity of the Israelites in Egypt, was revived in the wilderness by Moses. He held a General Assembly, and, as the first act of the reorganized institution, erected the Tabernacle.



From this time, Freemasonry was almost entirely confined to the Jewish nation, and was taught through its judges, priests, and kings, even to the time of Solomon.

When Solomon was about to erect the Temple at Jerusalem, he called to his help the experts and artists of Tyre, who were students and disciples of the Spurious Freemasonry and were skillful architects, as members of the Dionysiac brotherhood of artificers and workmen.<sup>1</sup>

This active association of the Tyrian Freemasons of the spurious order with the Jewish workmen who practiced the pure system, brought about a union of the two classes and King Solomon in due course reorganized the system of Freemasonry as it now exists.

To explain the spread of Freemasonry throughout the world and its firm and lasting establishment in England, Dr. Oliver adopts the legendary histories of both Anderson and Preston, accepting as genuine every mythical story and every manuscript. From the Leland manuscript he quotes as if he were citing an authority universally admitted to be trustworthy and accurate. Receiving the account of the General Assembly, which was called at York by Prince Edwin, as an event of whose occurrence there can be no possible doubt, he claims that the Halliwell or Regius poem is a true copy of the Constitutions made law by that Assembly.

Discussing the subject of the religious character of Freemasonry, Dr. Oliver in the main agrees with Hutchinson, that it is a Christian institution, and that all its myths and symbols have a Christian meaning. He differs from Hutchinson in this particular that, instead of limiting the introduction of the Christian element to the time of Christ, he supposes that to have existed in it from the earliest times. Even the Freemasonry of the Patriarchs he believes to have been based upon the accepted belief in a promised Messiah.

These views will be best expressed in his own language and they are found in a passage contained in the concluding pages of his *Historical Landmarks*: "The conclusion is therefore obvious.

<sup>1</sup> An early and but little known society of priests and workmen having, it is claimed, many points of resemblance to Freemasonry. Starting in Asia Minor they travelled through the East of Europe and in the course of time became attached to and merged with similar bodies.



If the lectures of Freemasonry refer only to events which preceded the advent of Christ, and if those events consist exclusively of admitted types of the Great Deliverer, who was pre-ordained to become a voluntary sacrifice for the salvation of mankind, it will clearly follow that the Order was originally instituted in accordance with the true principles of the Christian religion; and in all its consecutive steps bears an unerring testimony to the truth of the facts and of their typical reference to the Founder of our faith."

He said, still more positively, in an earlier part of the same book, that "Freemasonry contains scarcely a single ceremony, symbol, or historical narration which does not apply to this glorious consummation of the divine economy of the Creator towards his erring creatures." By the reference to economy he, of course, means the Christian order of things in the world and the Christian plan of salvation.

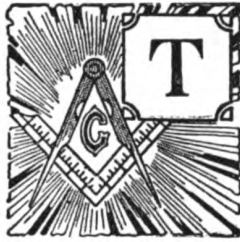
The proposition will hardly meet with a denial that in all these various essays upon the subject Dr. Oliver held that in the very earliest ages of the world there prevailed certain religious truths of vast importance to the welfare and happiness of mankind. These he held had been communicated either by direct inspiration or in some other mode. These foundation truths he believed to have been brought down by the means of tradition to the present day. All these truths principally consisted in an assertion of a belief in God and in a future life.

If Dr. Oliver also meant to claim that the task of bringing these truths to posterity and to the present age was committed to and preserved by an order of men, an association, or a society, whose form and features have been retained in the Freemasonry of the present day, it will we imagine be admitted that such a proposition is wholly out of the question. Yet this appears to be the theory that was held by this learned but too easily convinced scholar.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

### THE TEMPLE LEGEND



THE Temple Legend is a title that we may fairly give to that legend or tradition which traces the origin of Freemasonry as an organized institution to the Temple of Solomon and to the builders, Jewish and Tyrian, who were employed in the construction of that edifice.

The tradition of the Temple is the Legend that is now almost universally accepted by the great mass of the Masonic fraternity. Perhaps nine out of ten of the Freemasons of the present day — that is to say, all those who receive tradition with the undoubting faith that should be given only to history — conscientiously believe that Freemasonry, as we now see it, organized into Lodges and Degrees, with Grand Masters, Masters, and Wardens, with the same Ritual observances, was first devised by Solomon, King of Israel. They also accept as a fact the claim that under King Solomon our system of Freemasonry assumed its position as a secret society during the period when that great leader was engaged in the building of the Temple on Mount Moriah.<sup>1</sup>

We find that this theory is not a new one. Probably it was at first suggested by the passage in the Legend of the Craft, which briefly describes the building of the Temple and the official support of Solomon to the charges which his father David had given to the Freemasons.

There can be no doubt from this part of the Legend that the Temple of Solomon had a leading place in the ideas of the Free-

<sup>1</sup> In a sermon by the Rev. A. N. Keigwin, at the dedication of the Masonic Temple in Philadelphia (1873), we find the following passage: "Historically, Masonry dates from the building of the Temple of Solomon. No one at the present day disputes this claim." We quote this out of hundreds of similar passages in other writers, to show how universal among such educated Freemasons is the belief in the Temple theory. It is, in fact, very true that only those scholars who have made the history of the Order an especial study have any doubts upon the subject.



masons of the Middle Ages. How much use they made of it in their secret ceremonies we, of course, are unable to learn. It is, however, a curious coincidence, if nothing more, that there was a somewhat similar legend among the "Compagnons de la Tour." [Traveling Companions, Journeymen.] These were mystical associations of workmen who sprang up in France about the 12th century. They are supposed to have been an offshoot of dissatisfied journeymen from the body of overbearing Masters, who at that period formed the ruling power of the corporate guilds of Operative Freemasons and other crafts.

The traditions of this society in reference to the Temple of Solomon throw much light on the ideas which prevailed among the Freemasons in respect to the same subject. In fact, the Temple legends of the "Compagnons" are better known to us than those of the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages. Finally, as it is not at all unlikely that the ideas of the former were derived from those of the latter, it will be well worth our while to take a brief survey of the Temple Legend of the Compagnonage.

The Compagnons de la Tour have three distinct legends, each of which traces the association back to the Temple of Solomon. They credited the organization with having three different founders. This causes the Compagnonage to be divided into three distinct and, we are sorry to say, unfriendly associations. These are the Children of Solomon, the Children of Maître Jacques, and the Children of Père Soubise.

The Children of Solomon assert that they were formed into a brotherhood by King Solomon himself at the building of the Temple.

The Children of Maître Jacques and those of Père Soubise declare that both of these workmen were employed at the Temple. After finishing their work upon the Temple they went together to Gaul where they taught the arts which they had learned at Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup>

The tradition of Maître Jacques is particularly interesting. He is said to have been the son of a celebrated architect named Jacquain, who was one of the Chief Masters of Solomon and a

<sup>1</sup> The reader will remember the story in the Legend of the Craft of one Namus Grecus, who came from Jerusalem and from the Temple in the time of Charles Martel and taught Freemasonry in France.



co-worker with Hiram Abif. From the age of fifteen he was employed as a stone-cutter. He traveled through Greece where he got a knowledge of architecture and sculpture. Then he went to Egypt and thence to Jerusalem. There, being engaged in the building of the Temple, he made two pillars with such great skill that he was at once received as a Master of the Craft.

It is not necessary to pursue the Legend of the French Compagnonage any further. Sufficient has been told to show that they traced their origin to the Temple of Solomon and that the Legend referred to events connected with that building.

These associations or, perhaps we may not unfairly say, these unions of journeymen (for thus we can translate their French title) are known to have separated themselves in the 12th century from the corporations of Master Workmen because of the narrow and overbearing policy of these bodies, bringing about what in modern times would be called a "strike." It is reasonable to suppose that they carried with them into their new and independent organization many of the customs, ceremonies, and traditions which they had learned from the main body or Masters' guilds of which they were an offshoot.

Therefore, although we have not been able to find any legend or tradition of the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages which traced their origin to the Temple of Solomon, yet we can logically draw definite and clear conclusions from the evidence at hand. We find such a tradition prevailing among an association of workmen who as we know were at one time identified with the Operative Freemasons and that they left them because of a difference of opinion on a question of policy. We have thus a reasonable right to believe that the Legend of the Compagnons de la Tour, or Associated Journeymen, which traced their origin to the Temple of Solomon, was derived by them from the Corporations of Masters or Guilds of Operative Freemasons among whom it was an accepted tradition.

Certainly we have in this way the foundation for a reasonable belief that the Legend of the Temple origin of Freemasonry is older than the time of the Revival in the beginning of the 18th century. We can also conclude that it had been a recognized doctrine among the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages.



Absence of the story in any formal detail from all the old manuscripts does not prove that there was no such Legend. That being of a secret character, it may from conscientious motives or in obedience to some regulation never have been set down in writing. This is, however, a mere supposition and can not in any way interfere with deductions drawn from positive data in reference to the Legend of the Third Degree. There may have been a Temple Legend, and yet the details told in it may have been very incomplete and not have included the events related in the former account.

The first reference in the old records to the Temple of Solomon as connected with the origin of Freemasonry is to be found in the Cooke MS. and is in the following words:

"What tyme that the children of isrl dwellid in Egypte they lernyd the craft of masonry. And afterward they were driven out of Egypte they come into the lond of bihest [promise] and is now callyd Jerl'm [Jerusalem] and it was ocupied and chsrgys yholde. And the mak yng of Salomonis tempull that kyng David began. Kyng David lovyd well masons and he gaf hem rygt nye as thay be now. And at the mak yng of the temple in Salomonis tyme as hit is seyde in the bibull in the iij boke of Regum in teicio Regum capito quinto (1 Kings, Chap. 5) That Salomon had iiij score thowsand masons at his werke. And the kyngis sone of Tyre was his master mason, And (in) other croniclos hit is seyde and in olde bokys of masonry that Salomon confirmed the chargys that David his fadir had geve to masons. And Salomon hymself taught hem [them] here [their] maners [customs] but lityll differans fro the maners that now ben usyd. And fro thens this worthy sciens was brought into Fraunce and into many other regions."<sup>1</sup>

The Dowland MS., whose supposed date is about one hundred years later than the Cooke, gives nearly the same Legend, but with the additional circumstances, that David learned the charges that he gave, from Egypt, where they had been made by Euclid; that he added other charges to these; that Solomon sent into various countries for Freemasons, whom he gathered together; that the name of the King of Tyre was Iram, and that of his son, who was Solomon's Chief Master, was Aynon; and finally, that he was a Master of Geometry and of carving and graving.

<sup>1</sup> Cooke MS., lines 539-575.



We see in this brief story, the first edition of which dates back as far as the 15th century, the germs of the fuller Legend which prevails among the Craft at the present day. There was an organization of Freemasons with "Charges and Manners," that is, laws and customs at the building of the Temple of Jerusalem. King Solomon was assisted in the work by the King of Tyre and by a skillful artist who had been sent to him by Hiram. These are the two most important points in the theory of the Temple origin of Freemasonry, and both are clearly set forth in these early legends.

We next find the Legend repeated, but with more thorough working out of the details. Most of these particulars, however, are taken from the Book of Kings as referred to in the Legend of the Craft by Anderson, in the first edition of the *Constitutions*, and with a few additional particulars found in the second edition of the same work.

Preston, the next important Masonic writer after Anderson, does not indeed relate or refer to the Legend in any part of his *Illustrations of Masonry*. But the theory that Freemasonry found its origin at the Temple is to be deduced from the historical traditions contained in the third lecture of the Prestonian system from which Webb derived it, and he has made it popular and prized among American Freemasons to the present day.

Hutchinson, who followed Preston, although, as has been seen, he inclined to a remoter origin of the Order, repeatedly refers in his *Spirit of Masonry*, and especially in his sixth lecture, to the Temple of Solomon as the place where "the true craftsmen were proved in their work." This author assumed that Solomon placed these craftsmen in different ranks, giving to each appropriate signs and secret tokens, and organized them for the first time into an association of builders; the forerunners of the Freemasons being up to that time sages who, though acquainted with the principles of geometry and architecture, were engaged solely in philosophical studies and pursuits. In this way Hutchinson gave the weight of his influence in favor of the Legend which credited the origin of Operative and Speculative Freemasonry to Solomon and to his Temple, although his views on this subject differ from those of other writers.



Dr. Oliver, one of the most fruitful and industrious of the legendary writers, although in his own theory he seeks to trace the origin of Freemasonry to a much more distant period of the world's history, yet speaks much in detail in many of his works, but principally in his *Antiquities* and in his *Historical Landmarks*, of the system which was for the first time organized at the building of the Solomonic Temple. So freely and closely does he follow the latter line of thought that most readers who do not studiously read his writings and carefully scan his views are under the impression that he fully adopted the Legend of the Temple origin. Hence his authority has been misapplied in favor of the popular belief.

The Legend existed, as may be supposed from the comparison with a similar legend of the Compagnons de la Tour, among the craftsmen of the Middle Ages. Then it was according to this theory handed on to the Revival period of the beginning of the 18th century. Since then this Legend has been taught in all the rituals, and sustained by the best Masonic writers up to a recent period.

The very natural result has been that this Legend of the Temple origin of Freemasonry, or, in plainer words, the theory that Freemasonry received at the time of the building of the Temple of Jerusalem that form and organization which it holds at the present day, has been and continues to be a dogma of faith absolutely believed by the masses of the Fraternity.

Therefore, it is well that we should now see precisely what is the form and substance of this popular Legend. As received at the present day by the body of the Craft, it may be stated as follows:

When Solomon was about to commence the building of his Temple, his own people not being expert or experienced architects, he applied to his friend Hiram, the monarch of the neighboring kingdom of Tyre, for assistance. Hiram, in complying with his request, sent to him a numerous body of workmen. At their head a noted artist who was called, as a mark of esteem, Hiram Abif,<sup>1</sup> a name equivalent to the title, "Hiram, the father," who is described as "a cunning man endued with understanding."

<sup>1</sup> A more detailed account of Hiram Abif is given in this work where we consider the Legend connected with him.



King Solomon then proceeded to organize the institution into a form which has been adopted as the model of that prevailing at the present day in every country where Freemasonry exists. The Legend that contains the classification of the workmen at the Temple, a story and a list freely adopted in modern Freemasonry, is taken partly from Scripture and partly from tradition. An examination of it will not be out of place right here.

There are two accounts, slightly conflicting, in the account of the Bible. In the Second Book of Chronicles, chapter ii, verses 17 and 18, are the following words:

“And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel, after the number wherewith David his father had numbered them, and there were found an hundred and fifty thousand and three thousand and six hundred.

“And he set three score and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens and four score thousand to be hewers in the mountains and three thousand six hundred overseers to set the people at work.”

The same details of the figures are given in the second verse of the same chapter. Again in the First Book of Kings, chapter v, verses 13 and 14, it is said:

“And King Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men.

“And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses; a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home: and Adoniram was over the levy.”

These figures have not been followed strictly in the Legend of the Craft. The Cooke MS. says that there were “four score thousand masons at work,” out of whom three thousand were chosen as Masters of the Work. The Lansdowne MS. says that the number of Masons was twenty-four thousand. But this latter number must have been a clerical error of the copyist in which he is followed only by the Antiquity MS. Other early manuscripts agree with the Dowland and make the number of Masons eighty thousand, including the three thousand overseers or Masters of the Work.

Of course this numbering of the Craft in Israel does not accord with that which is in the Book of Kings nor with that in Chronicles. But it is all that the Legend of the Craft furnishes to us.



Dr. Anderson, who was the first author after the Revival who prepared a list numbering and classifying the workmen at the Temple, cast aside the Legend altogether and made up his account from the Bible. This he published in the first edition of the *Constitutions* and tempered it with some traditional information. Where these latter particulars were obtained is now unknown. But it is on this classification by Anderson that all the rituals that have been in use since his time are framed. Hence he may justly be considered as the author of the Legend of the Workmen at the Temple. We may properly call his account in that particular a legend. Notwithstanding the historical element which that story contains, and we must admit that to be taken from the Bible, there are so many additions in a traditional way from his pen that it quite naturally assumes a legendary character.

Anderson's account is that there were employed on the building three thousand six hundred Master Masons, to conduct the work according to King Solomon's directions; eighty thousand hewers of stone in the mountains who he says were Fellow Craftsmen, and seventy thousand laborers who were not Masons, besides the levy of thirty thousand who worked under the superintendence of Adoniram, making in all one hundred and eighty-three thousand six hundred.

For this great number of workers, Anderson says Solomon was "much obliged" to Hiram, King of Tyre, who sent his Masons and carpenters to Jerusalem.

To control this immense army of builders and laborers, Anderson says that King Solomon presided as Grand Master at Jerusalem, King Hiram acted in the same kind of a position at Tyre, and Hiram Abif was in general charge as the Master of the Work.

But fifteen years afterwards, Anderson in the second edition of his *Constitutions* somewhat altered these views and added certain other particulars. He promotes Hiram Abif from the position of *Magister Operis* or Master of the Work, to that of Deputy Grand Master in Solomon's absence and to that of Senior Grand Warden when that king was present. Anderson also says:

"Solomon partitioned the Fellow Crafts into certain Lodges with a Master and Wardens in each; that they might receive



commands in a regular manner, might take care of their tools and jewels, might be paid every week, and be duly fed and clothed, etc., and the Fellow Crafts took care of their succession by educating Entered Apprentices.”<sup>1</sup>

Anderson adds in a marginal note that his authority for this claim is in “the traditions of old Masons, who talk much of these things.”

Doubtless that is true. He is not likely to have invented something that was so easily checked in his own day. Had he done so there were many to correct him. But the claim can not be found in any of the old manuscripts which are the accredited record of the Masonic traditions. We may admit that similar practices were commonly used by the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages, but we have no historical authority, nor even legendary foundation, outside of Anderson’s work, for tracing them to the Temple of Jerusalem.

Yet out of these materials the revisers of the ceremonies of the Craft have built up a legend. This legend exists in all the Masonic instruction. It must have been constructed in London, at a very early period after the Revival in 1717, to have been so generally accepted among all the nations who got their Freemasonry from the Grand Lodge of England.

The Legend of the Temple origin of Freemasonry, as commonly received by the Craft at the present day, is that there were one hundred and fifty-three thousand three hundred workmen employed in the construction of the Temple. Three thousand three hundred of these were overseers, who were placed among, as well as over, the Craft, but who at the completion of the Temple were advanced to the rank of Master Masons. The remaining workmen were divided into eighty thousand Fellow Crafts and seventy thousand Entered Apprentices.

Three Grand Masters presided over the large number of workmen, namely, Solomon, King of Israel; Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abif, the Master Workman. These were the only persons who at the building of the Temple were Master Masons and in possession of the secrets of the Third Degree.

We are usually informed that the workmen were divided into Lodges. The Lodge of Master Masons, for there could be only

<sup>1</sup> “Constitutions,” 2d edit., p. 13.



one of that degree, consisted of three members; the Lodges of Fellow Crafts, of which there must have been sixteen thousand, were composed of five members each; and the Lodges of Entered Apprentices, of which there must have been ten thousand, were of seven each.

This statement has neither historical authority nor logical possibility to support it. We Freemasons should consider it, as it undoubtedly was in the first place meant to be understood, merely as a reference to the symbolic character of those sacred numbers in the teaching of our ancient art and science — three, five, and seven. In the same spirit of symbolic reference the steps of the winding stairs leading to the middle chamber were divided into a series of three, five, and seven, with the addition in the English style of giving such knowledge of nine and eleven. All of this, therefore, is to be rejected from the class of legends and referred to that of symbols.

Let us in that reasonable manner view this legend or theory of the origin of Freemasonry at the Temple, tracing it from the almost naked state in which it is presented in the Legend of the Craft and onward through the period of clothing which was added by Anderson and we may suppose by Desaguliers, to the ornamented condition in which it appears in modern times. We will come in that way to the following conclusion:

In the Legend of the Craft we find only this claim: That King Solomon was assisted in the building of the Temple by the King of Tyre who sent him materials for the edifice and also supplied a skillful artist. On the name of this great Craftsman and Architect scarcely any two of the old authorities agree. Solomon appointed him as his Master of the Work. Solomon invited Masons from all lands and having collected them together at Jerusalem, organized them into a body by giving them a system of laws and customs for their government.

Now, most of these facts are sustained by the historical authority of the Books of Kings and Chronicles. Those that are not so maintained by the Bible have nevertheless the support of extreme probability.

Solomon, King of Israel, built a Temple in Jerusalem. That at any rate is a historical fact that can not be denied or even doubted. Richard Carlile, it is true, says:



"My historical researches have taught me that that which has been called Solomon's Temple never existed upon earth; that a nation of people called Israelites never existed upon earth, and that the supposed history of the Israelites and their Temple is nothing more than an allegory."<sup>1</sup>

But the measure of the moral and mental stature of Carlile has long been taken, and even among the most skeptical critics he remains alone in his unbelief which had neither reason nor good taste to excuse his attacks.

Doubtless there are Oriental excesses in respect to the amount of money spent and the number of workmen employed on the building,—all these may easily and without bad intent have been overestimated and, therefore, overstated. But the simple naked fact that King Solomon built a temple remains uncontradicted. That assertion is as historically true and trustworthy as that of the building of any other public edifice of the olden times.

It is equally historical that the King of Tyre gave assistance to Solomon in carrying out his design. However fiercely the skeptics may have attacked certain portions of the Bible, the Books of Kings and Chronicles have been placed upon the footing of other ancient historical records and tried by the same standard tests or canons of criticism.

We are distinctly told that Hiram, King of Tyre, "sent masons and carpenters to David to build him a house."<sup>2</sup> We learn later on that the same Hiram (some say his son) was equally friendly with Solomon. Although there is no distinct mention either in Kings or Chronicles that he sent workmen to Jerusalem,<sup>3</sup> except his namesake, the artificer, yet we may infer that he did so. This conclusion we reach from the friendship of the two kings, from the need of Solomon for expert workmen, and from the fact which we learn from the First Book of Kings that the stones

<sup>1</sup> "Manual of Freemasonry," Part I, p. 4. Carlile, the author of this work, was a printer. He published unlawfully such books as Thomas Paine's "Age of Reason" and thereby spent some nine years in jail. Born in Devonshire in 1790, he came to London in 1817 and died in 1843. Several essays of his on Freemasonry pretending to expose its ceremonies were in 1845 collected in one volume, which is here quoted to show the extreme view of an atheistical mind.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Chronicles, xiv, 1.

<sup>3</sup> We are told in 1 Kings, v, and it is repeated in 2 Chronicles, ii, that Hiram sent his workmen to Lebanon to cut down trees. The timber they were to carry to Joppa where Solomon was to receive it and then we may expect the workmen were to return to the forest.



for the edifice were hewn by "Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the Giblym." The authorized version of the Bible, 1 Kings, v, 18, translates this word "Giblym" as "stone-squarers." They were, however, the inhabitants of the city of Gebal, called by the Greeks, Byblos, which was the principal seat of the worship and the mysteries of Adonis. The inhabitants were celebrated for their skill in stone-carving and in shipbuilding.<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see that there were, according to the Scriptural account, three classes of Masons engaged at the building of the Temple. First there were the workmen of Solomon: these were of the "four score thousand hewers in the mountains"<sup>2</sup> who were taken by Solomon from "the strangers that were in the land of Israel"<sup>3</sup>—men whom Dr. Adam Clarke supposes to have been not pure Israelites, but converts to the Jewish religion so far as to give up idolatry and to keep the precepts of Noah.

But we must believe that among these four score thousand strangers were to be counted the workmen who came from Tyre, or there will be no place for them in the list given in the First Book of Kings. The three thousand three hundred who were "over the work," are said to have been chief officers of Solomon and therefore Israelites, and the remaining seventy thousand were mere laborers or bearers of burden—a class for whom Solomon need not have been indebted to the King of Tyre.

Secondly, there were the workmen of Hiram, King of Tyre. These were probably, and indeed necessarily, included in the number of four score thousand strangers or foreigners. The words in the original are *anoshim gherim*, men who are foreigners, for Gesenius defines the word *gherim* to be "*sojourners, strangers, foreigners, men living out of their country.*"

Thirdly, we have the Giblym, the inhabitants of the city of Gebal in Phœnicia, who came to Jerusalem, invited there by Solomon, to assist in the construction of the Temple, and who must also be counted among the four score thousand strangers.

<sup>1</sup> Ezekiel xxvii, 9, among several passages mentioning the skill of the Phœnicians as pilots at sea and shipbuilders on land, especially referring to "The ancients of Gebal and the wise men thereof as calkers. This word in margin is defined as strengtheners and stoppers of chinks, really finishers of the work. Anderson in the "Constitutions," spells the word "ghiblim" and tells of "John de Spoulee, call'd Master of the Ghiblim," as rebuilding the King's chapel in the reign of Edward III.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings, v, 15.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Chronicles, ii, 17.



Thus the Legend of the Craft is justified in saying that Solomon "sent after Masons into divers countries and of divers landes," and that he had "four score thousand workers of stone and were all named Masons." These were foreigners or sojourners, whom he found in Jerusalem, many of whom had probably come there on his invitation, and the Tyrians who had been sent to him by King Hiram, and the Phœnicians, whom he had called out of Gebal on account of their well-known skill in stone-cutting. All of these amounted to eighty thousand, the number stated in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, and just the number mentioned in the Legend of the Craft.

It will be seen that the Legend of the Craft takes no notice of the levy of thirty thousand who worked under Adoniram on Mount Lebanon, nor of the seventy thousand who were employed as bearers of burdens. As the former were merely wood-cutters and the latter common laborers, the Legend does not class them among the Masons any more than it does the three thousand three hundred who were according to the Biblical account officers of the Court of Solomon, appointed merely to overlook the Masons and to see that they worked faithfully; perhaps also to pay them their wages, or to distribute their food, and to supervise generally their conduct.

The Legend of the Craft differs entirely from the modern instruction which includes all these classes, and therefore figures out that at the building of the Temple there were one hundred and fifty-three thousand three hundred Masons, instead of eighty thousand. The Legend is certainly more in accord with the authority of the Bible.

The Legend of the Craft is also justified in saying that Solomon organized these Masons into what might be called a gild, that is, a society or corporation,<sup>1</sup> by giving them "charges and manners" — in other words, a code of laws and regulations. On this question the Bible account is silent. But it fairly amounts to a probability, remote but within reason, the nearest approach to historical evidence, that there must have been some regulations made into law for the government of so large a number of workmen.

<sup>1</sup> The Latin original of the Krause MS. calls it "*Societas architetonica*"—an architectural society.



We may go further and say it is also equally probable that to avoid confusion these workmen must have been divided into sections, or what in modern workshop talk would be called "gangs," engaged in various parts of the building and in different employments. There must have been a higher and more skillful class occupied in directing the works of these several sections; there must have been others less skillful and yet competent to discharge the duties of stone-cutters and layers, and there must have been another and still inferior class who were only learning the first steps of the trade.

Following out to their logical end these evident propositions, Anderson made his division of the workmen at the Temple into the three classes of Master Masons, Fellow Crafts, and Entered Apprentices. But he abandoned the Legend in calling the three thousand six hundred officers of King Solomon Master Masons and making the whole number, exclusive of the seventy thousand laborers and the thirty thousand wood-cutters on Mount Lebanon, eighty-three thousand, and afterward stating that there were one hundred and eighty-three thousand Masons in all — a contradiction of his own previous statement as well as of the Legend of the Craft which states the whole number of Masons to have been eighty thousand.

The modern teaching in our ceremonies may, however, be considered as having adopted the Temple of Jerusalem as a type of that great and rich symbol of a spiritual temple which forms one of the most important and most interesting symbolic lessons on which the philosophy of Speculative Freemasonry depends. But viewing it as a historical statement, it is without all claims to belief. The facts stated in the monitors are an outgrowth of those contained in the Legend of the Craft which it has greatly altered by unauthorized additions, and it is in entire contradiction to those given in the Books of Kings and Chronicles.

The claim that Freemasonry took its origin at the building of the Temple is without any historical authority. The Legend of the Craft, upon which, to be consistent, all Masonic rituals should be founded, assigns its origin equally to two other periods — to that of the building of the Tower of Babel, when Nimrod was Grand Master, and to Egypt under the geometrician, Euclid.



Why the Temple of Solomon was exclusively selected by the modern Freemasons as the cradle of their Order can in the opinion of Bro. Mackey be only guessed. Bro. W. J. Hughan points out that the extraordinary popularity of books on the Temple of Solomon, and the many models made and publicly shown during the latter part of the 17th century and early in the 18th century, may naturally have led to the use of the Legend in the Masonic instruction from some time in the Revival period, say about 1717 to 1723. He further thinks that we must admit it can not be said that the "Old Charges" make a leading feature of that great historical building. Neither are the Biblical worthies familiar to modern Freemasons very noticeable figures in the ancient manuscripts of the Fraternity. The reports of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, London, for 1899 are worth a careful study on this point.

We are not unwilling to believe, for reasons that have been already suggested, that the Operative or Stone Masons of the Middle Ages had some tradition or legend of the origin of the institution at the Temple of Solomon.

If that be granted, we are inclined to credit their selection of this in preference to any other stately building of old to these reasons:

The Freemasons of the Middle Ages were as an association of builders most closely connected with the church officials of that period. Their principal home at one time was in the monasteries with the monks, they worked under the immediate favor and supervision of bishops and abbots, and were chiefly engaged in the construction of cathedrals and other religious edifices.

Private houses at that early period were mainly built of wood, and the building of them was the business of carpenters. The *treon-wyr-hta*, literally the tree-workman, in modern phrase the carpenter, was one of the most important handicrafts of the early Anglo-Saxons. He was the builder of their ships as well as of their houses, and the trade is frequently spoken of in the old Saxon documents. He was constantly employed in the construction of vessels for the carrying on of trade, or the erection of dwellings for the residences of the people.

To the stone-masons was exclusively entrusted the nobler work of building religious edifices.



They were inspired with religious sentiments from their connection with the priests as well as from their peculiar employment. They naturally looked for the type of the great cathedrals which they were erecting, not to Pagan temples, however splendid might be their architecture, but rather to that Jewish building which had been set up and made holy on Mount Moriah to the worship of the true God. Hence the brief notice of that building in the Legend of the Craft was either the suggestion of that esoteric Legend of the Temple which has not, from its necessarily oral or mouth-to-ear character, been brought down to us, or if the written Legend was later in time to the oral one, then it was a short record of it.

But we do not believe that this lost Legend of the stone-masons was ever intended to be strictly historical. Not so much history was it as philosophy in the making, a subject full of suggestion. It was simply a symbol to illustrate the idea that the Temple at Jerusalem was the type of all Christian cathedrals.

This symbolic Legend, which we may reasonably suppose to have existed among the stone-masons of the Middle Ages, was probably lost before the Revival of Freemasonry in the year 1717. Anderson therefore framed a new Legend of the Craft, together with the Scriptural account, all combined with more or less of his own invention.

Upon this legend of Anderson's, simple in the first edition of the *Constitutions*, but considerably enlarged in the second, the modern authors of monitors and rituals have framed another legend, which in many important details differs from that of Anderson, as well as from the Legend of the Craft and from the account in the Bible.

This is the Legend now accepted and believed by the great body of the Craft to be historically true. That it has no claim to historical standing is evident from the fact that it is in its most important details unauthorized and indeed is contradicted by the Scriptural account. This conflict of statement can only be read in the light shed by the Bible story, for that is the one trustworthy record that we have of what took place at the building of Solomon's Temple.

Moreover, we must not overlook the long period that elapsed between the building of the Temple, a thousand years before the



Christian era, and the time not earlier than the 3d century after Christ during which we have no traces of the existence of such an architectural association connected with Jewish Masons and continued from them to the Christian architects. This great stretch of time presents a wide gap which must be filled by authentic records, before we can be enabled as scholars investigating truth to consent to the theory that the Freemasons of the present day are by uninterrupted succession the representatives of the Masons who wrought at King Solomon's Temple.

The Legend of the Temple is, in fact, a symbol — but a very important and a very interesting one. As such it is fully discussed where the subject of Masonic symbols is treated in another part of this work.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

### LEGEND OF THE DIONYSIAC ARTIFICERS



WE now approach a very interesting topic in the legendary history of Masonry. The reader is aware that the Masons of the kingdom of Tyre were invited to join with the Jewish builders in the construction of the Temple. Who these Tyrian Masons were, what was their character, whence they came, and what was the influence exerted by them on the Jewish workmen with whom they were united in a common labor, are questions only to be solved by a reference to what may be called the Legend of the Dionysiac Artificers.

This Legend was entirely unknown to the old Freemasons of the Middle Ages. There is no reference to it in any of the manuscripts. The brief allusion to the Dionysiacs of Asia Minor in Robison's anti-Masonic work does not necessarily connect them with the Masons of King Solomon.<sup>1</sup>

The first writer who appears to have started the theory that the Masons sent by King Hiram to the King of Israel were members of the Dionysiac fraternity, is Sir David Brewster.<sup>2</sup> He presented the Legend under the guise of a historic statement in the *History of Freemasonry*, published in the beginning of the 19th century. The authorship of this book, although it was actually written by him, has been falsely attributed to Alexander

<sup>1</sup> "Proofs of a Conspiracy," p. 20. The author of this work was Prof. John Robison, the Scotch physicist and mathematician. He was also Secretary to the Royal Society at Edinburgh, Scotland. Born in 1739, he died in 1805. Initiated in Belgium, joined an English Lodge at St. Petersburg, Russia, his book vigorously attacks the secret societies including Freemasonry on the Continent of Europe for their enmity to governments and religions but he excepts British Lodges from this class and says they retained their original form, simple and unadorned, "scenes of innocent merriment, or meetings of charity and beneficence."

<sup>2</sup> Sir David Brewster, a Scotch physicist who invented the kaleidoscope, an instrument which by means of mirrors enables objects to be seen through it in symmetrical patterns. He was born in 1781 and died in 1868.



Lawrie, the bookseller of Edinburgh and at the time the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Brewster may therefore be fairly considered as the original framer of the Legend.

The origin of the mystical and architectural society which Brewster closely connects with the Masons of the Temple may be given in almost his own words:<sup>1</sup>

Between 1055 and 1044 years before Christ, or something more than half a century in advance of the building of the Temple<sup>2</sup> the people of Attica, complaining of the narrowness of their territory and the unfruitfulness of the soil, went in search of larger and more fertile settlements. Being joined by a number of the inhabitants of the surrounding provinces of Greece, they sailed to Asia Minor and drove out the dwellers in that portion of the western coast, from Phocœa, in the north, to Miletus in the south. To this narrow strip of land they gave the name of Ionia, because the greatest number of the adventurers were natives of that Grecian state. After partly subduing and partly expelling the original people of that country, they built several towns, of which one of the principal was Teos.

Before entering upon this conquest the Greeks had made considerable progress in the arts and sciences which the adventurers carried with them into their new territory. They also brought into Ionia the Mysteries of Pallas and Dionysus before these had become decayed by the excesses of the Athenians.

Especially popular, not only in Ionia but throughout Asia Minor, were the Mysteries of Dionysus, the Roman Bacchus. In these, as in all the religious Mysteries of antiquity, there was a funereal legend.

In the Dionysiac Mysteries the legend of initiation told or represented the death of the demi-god Dionysus, the search for and discovery of his body, and his restoration to life.

During the initiations the candidate was made to represent in his own person the events connected with the slaying of the hero-god. There was first a variety of ceremonies to prepare and introduce the candidate, intended to call forth all his fortitude

<sup>1</sup> Lawrie's "History of Freemasonry," 1st edition, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> This suggestion as to the time when the Temple of King Solomon was built may be permitted because it is in general accord with the traditions that cling to the Bible. Briefly, however, we may add that Hastings' "Bible Dictionary" says that Solomon became king in the year 969 before Christ, about fifty years later than the usual estimate.



and courage. Then the aphanism (loss or concealment) or mystical death of Dionysus — torn to pieces by the Titans — was presented in a dramatic form. This was followed by the confinement or burial of the candidate as the representative of Dionysus in the pastos, couch, or coffin. All of these incidents of drama and of ritual formed the first part of the ceremony of initiation.

Then began the search for the remains of Dionysus. This was continued amid scenes of the greatest noise and confusion. Finally, the search having been successful, the mourning was turned to joy, light succeeded to darkness, and the candidate was invested with the knowledge of the secret doctrine of the Mysteries — the belief in the existence of one God, and a future and immortal state.<sup>1</sup>

These Mysteries of Dionysus were very closely connected with a society of architects. This association, according to the Legend which we are now considering, had much to do with the organization of Masonry at the Solomonic Temple, and it is necessary to take a brief notice of its origin and character.

Fairly well founded as historical fact is it that at the time of the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, there existed at Tyre as well as in other parts of Asia Minor an association known as the *Dionysian Architects*. They were so named because they joined to the practice of operative architecture the observance of the religious rites of the Dionysiac Mysteries.

We have already stated that the priests of Dionysus devoted themselves to the study and the practice of architecture, and about one thousand years before the Christian era, or at the time that King Solomon began the construction of the Temple at Jerusalem, they had emigrated from Greece and established themselves as a society or fraternity of builders in Asia Minor where they undertook the construction of temples and other public edifices.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Le meurtre de Bacchus mis à mort et déchiré en pièces par les Titans, et son retour à la vie, ont été le sujet d'explications allégoriques tout-à-fait analogues à celles que l'on a données de l'enlèvement de Proserpine et du meurtre d'Osiris. (The murder of Bacchus put to death and torn into pieces by the Titans, and his return to life, have been the subject of allegorical explanations quite similar to those given of the abduction of Proserpine and of the murder of Osiris.)—Sylvestre de Tracy in Sainte-Croix's "Recherches sur les Mystères du Paganisme," T. ii, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Chandler says "the Dionysiasts were artificers or contractors for the Asiatic theaters, and were incorporated and settled at Teos, under the Kings of Pergamum."—"Travels in Asia Minor," vol. I, ch. xxviii, p. 123. (This was at a later period than the era of the Temple.)



Hiram then reigned over the kingdom of Tyre and from his cultivation of the sciences has been styled the Augustus of his age. He is said to have patronized these religious builders and to have employed them in the great public works by which he adorned and strengthened his capital.

The internal government and the usages of this association were very similar to those exhibited by the Masonic society at the present day, and which the legendary theory supposes to have prevailed among the builders of the Solomonic Temple.

The fraternity was divided into communities called *synæciæ*,<sup>1</sup> having houses or dwellings in common, which might well be compared to the Masonic Lodges of the present day. Their places of meeting were also called in Greek *koina*, which signifies communities. Each received a distinctive name just as our Lodges do. Thus Chishull speaks in his account of the pre-Christian antiquities of Asia of a "koinon ton Attaliston," or a "community of the Attalistæ," so called most probably in honor of King Attalus who was their patron.<sup>2</sup>

There was an annual festival, like the General Assembly or Grand Lodge of the Freemasons, which was held with great pomp and ceremony. Chandler says (but he speaks of a later period, when they were settled at Teos) that it was the custom of their synod to hold yearly a General Assembly at which they sacrificed to the gods and poured out libations to their dead patrons. They likewise celebrated games in honor of Bacchus. At these festivals the crowns which had been given by any of the communities as rewards of merit were announced by heralds, and the wearers of them were applauded by the other members. These meetings, he adds, were observed with great display and festivity.<sup>3</sup>

The same traveler mentions a long decree made by one of the communities in honor of its magistrates. This edict he found inscribed on a slab in a Turkish burying-ground. The thanks of the community with a crown of olives are given as a token of regard to these officers for their great liberality and carefulness

<sup>1</sup> "Antiquitates Asiaticæ Christianam Aeram Antecedentes," p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> Rollin's "Universal History" places Attalus in the rank of those princes who loved and patronized letters and the arts.

<sup>3</sup> Chandler, "Travels in Asia Minor," vol. I, ch. xxx, p. 126.



while in office; and to keep green their memory and to lead others to imitate their merit, it is also enacted that the decrees be engraved, but at their expense, "so desirable," says Chandler, "was the testimony to the individuals and so frugal the usage in bestowing it."<sup>1</sup>

As an architectural association the Dionysiaks used many of the implements employed by Operative Masons; and as a secret brotherhood they had a system of signs and tokens by which any one of the members could make himself known to the others. Professor Robison, who may be accepted on this point as authority, admits that they were "distinguished from the uninitiated or profane inhabitants by the science which they possessed and by many private signs and tokens by which they recognized each other."<sup>2</sup>

Each of the "koina" or separate communities into which they were divided was under the direction of officers corresponding to a Master and Wardens.<sup>3</sup> The Masonic principle of charity was practiced among them and the wealthy members were bound to provide for the wants and necessities of their poorer brethren.

The Legend connecting these architects with the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, assumes that Hiram Abif was a member of this secret association. The Bible does not favor this claim since it states that he was simply a worker in metals and precious stones. But we may suppose that such craftsmen were admitted into the association of the Dionysiaks because their decorative art was necessary to perfect the temples and other structures built by the latter.

Historically the Legend proceeds to state that when Solomon was about to build a temple to Jehovah, he made his intention known to his friend and ally, Hiram, King of Tyre, and because he was well aware of the architectural skill of the Tyrian Dionysiaks, he besought assistance to enable him to carry out his pious design. Hiram agreed and sent him the necessary workmen, who by their skill and experience might supply the needs of the Israelites.

<sup>1</sup> Chandler, "Travels in Asia Minor," vol. I, ch. xxviii, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> "Proofs of a Conspiracy," p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Brewster in Lawrie's "History," p. 29.



With the body of builders came Hiram Abif, who as "a curious and cunning workman," highly praised by his patron, was entrusted by King Solomon with the superintendence and placed at the head of both the Tyrian and Jewish craftsmen as the chief builder and principal conductor of the work.

To this distinguished artist, on account of the large influence of his position and the high personal virtues which tradition gives to him, is to be credited, according to the Legend, the intimate union of two peoples so unlike in customs and so opposed in religion as the Jews and the Tyrians, which resulted in organized Freemasonry.

Let us suppose that as the Legend assumes, Hiram Abif was connected with the Dionysiac fraternity. Then we may also suppose that he could not have been a very humble or inconspicuous member if we may judge of his rank in the society from the amount of ability he is said to have possessed, and from the place he held in the esteem of the King of Tyre.

Hiram Abif must therefore have been very familiar with all the ceremonies of the Dionysiac artificers and must have enjoyed a long experience of the advantages derived from the government and discipline which they practiced in the erection of so many sacred edifices. These ceremonies and this discipline he would naturally be inclined to introduce among the workmen at Jerusalem. He therefore united them in a society similar in many respects to that of the Dionysiac artificers. He taught his fellow builders the Masonic lessons of charity and brotherly love; he established a ceremony of initiation to test by practical experiment the worth and fortitude of the candidate; adopted secret methods of recognition; and impressed the obligations of duty and the principles of morality by means of symbols and allegories.

Difficulties must have arisen in uniting the pagan symbolic instruction of the Tyrians with the religious notions of the Jews. These, however, the Legend ingeniously overcomes. Easily the most prominent symbol of Speculative Freemasonry, that indeed on which the whole of the ethical instructions is founded, is contained in the lesson of resurrection to a future life as developed in the allegorical Legend of the Master's Degree.

This very doctrine was also illustrated by an allegorical legend in the Pagan Mysteries of which the Dionysia were a part. In



the Mysteries of Dionysus which were practiced by the Tyrian architects the Legend related to the death and the later resurrection of Bacchus or Dionysus. It would have been utterly impossible to have introduced such a legend as that for the basis of any instructions to be given to Jewish initiates. Any respect to the myths and fables of their pagan Gentile neighbors would have been equally offensive to the social and religious prejudices of the Jews. They were of a nation educated from generation to generation in the worship of a Divine Being who they had been taught was jealous of his prerogatives, and who had made himself known to their fathers as the **JEHOVAH**, the only God of time, present, past, and future.

This basic difficulty of obtaining a legend on which the dogma of the Third Degree might be built was avoided by putting Hiram Abif after his death (at which time only the system could have been perfected) in the place of Dionysus. The lesson taught in the Mysteries practiced by the Dionysiac artificers was thus translated into the Masonic instruction, the form of the symbolism remaining the same but the circumstances of the Legend necessarily being different.

By this union of the Dionysiaks with the Jewish workmen and with the introduction of their mystical organization, the Masonic Order assumed at the building of the Temple that purely speculative form connected with the operative which it has ever since retained.

Freemasonry took from its Jewish additions a distinct religious character as a pure monotheism, the doctrine that there is but one God.

From its Tyrian element Freemasonry borrowed its peculiar mystical character and its system of symbolism. These features so put it into harmony with the ancient Pagan Mysteries, that a legend has been framed which traces the origin of Freemasonry directly to those secret associations of antiquity. This particular legend has due consideration in the present work.

When the Temple was finished, the workmen were invested with all the secrets promised in their initiation. Thus becoming Master Masons, they dispersed that they might be enabled to increase their knowledge and to renew their labors in other lands.



Such is the Legend which seeks to credit the present form of Freemasonry to the connection of the Dionysiac artisans of Tyre with the Jewish workmen at the building of the Temple. So much of the Legend as relates to the existence of a sodality or fraternity of builders at Tyre (leaving out the question whether they were or were not Dionysiaks), some of whose members went to Jerusalem to assist in the construction of King Solomon's Temple, may be accepted as being of historical standing.<sup>1</sup> What were the real influences exerted by them on the Jewish people is a question whose answer finds no place in history but must be surmised.

Brewster describes the Dionysiaks as they existed in about the 3d century before Christ, and after their incorporation by King Attalus, as if they maintained the same condition in the reign of Hiram of Tyre seven hundred years before. For this statement there is no warrant in any historical record. That the Dionysiaks of Tyre and those of Teos were identical in organization is simply a theory based on mere assumption. Certainly they who adopt the Legend that Freemasonry was first organized at the Temple of Solomon will find much to sustain their theory in the Legend of Dionysiac Artificers. It is equally certain that those who deny the Temple theory must reject the Dionysiac. The two are too closely connected to be parted in any offhand way.

Laying the subject of Freemasonry altogether aside and considering the relations of the Tyrians with the Jews at the Temple as a mere historical question, it would present a very interesting study to determine the results of that connection if there were any way of solving it except by guessing.

Later history of the association of Dionysiac Architects forms no part of the Legend just recited. But we may here to advantage trace their progress. About seven hundred years after the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, they are said to have been incorporated by the King of Pergamum, an ancient province of Mysia, as a society exclusively engaged in the erection of public buildings such as theaters and temples. They settled at Teos, an Ionian city, on the coast of Asia Minor, where notwithstanding its troubles they remained for several centuries. Among the works by them were a magnificent theater and a splendid temple of Dionysus, ruins of which still remain.

<sup>1</sup> This should also be weighed in the light of the chapter devoted to Hiram Abif.



Becoming unruly they were at length expelled from Teos and departed to Ephesus. King Attalus sent them from that city to Myonessus. The Teians sending representatives to Rome requesting that the Myonessians should not be permitted to fortify their city, the Dionysiacs removed to Lebedos, about fifteen miles from Teos, where they were welcomed.

In the 5th century of the Christian era the Emperor Theodosius forbid all mystical associations but the Dionysiacs are said to have continued their existence until the time of the Crusades. Then they passed over into Europe and were merged in the association of builders known as the Traveling Freemasons of the Middle Ages.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

### FREEMASONRY AND THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES



HIS theory credits the origin of Freemasonry as a secret society to the Pagan Mysteries of the ancient world. The claim so made is that we get the most important part of our ritual and the Legend of the Third Degree from the initiation practiced in these very early religious organizations and their ceremonies. Therefore we are the more inclined to connect this theory with the Legend of the Temple origin of the institution because we can link the initiation in the Mysteries with that of Freemasonry by supposing that the one was in some way built on the other at the time of the erection of the Temple and of the intimate union of the Jewish and Tyrian workmen.

Before we can properly estimate the theory which unites Freemasonry with the Pagan Mysteries, we must make ourselves acquainted with the nature and the design as well as with something of the history of those mystical societies.

There existed two systems of worship, a public and a private one, among all the nations of the old world where the coming of refinement had given a cultured tone to the rising sentiments of religion. "Each of the pagan Gods," says Warburton, "had (besides the public and open) a secret worship paid unto him, to which none were admitted but those who had been selected by preparatory ceremonies, called INITIATION. This secret worship was called the MYSTERIES."<sup>1</sup>

That public worship of the common people, distinct and separate from the one above mentioned by Warburton, was founded on the false and unreasonable pagan religions whose many gods and goddesses were wicked by nature and vicious in conduct. Virtue could not be learned from their example. Their weakly-

<sup>1</sup> "Divine Legation of Moses," B. I, sect. iv, p. 193.



human acts furnished rather excuses for vice than the teaching of morals.

In the *Eunuchus* of Terenție, when Chærea is planning the seduction of the virgin Pamphila, he refers to the similar act of Jupiter, who in a shower of gold had corrupted Danæ, and he exclaims, "If a god, who by his thunders shakes the whole universe, could commit this crime, shall not I, a mere mortal, do so also?"<sup>1</sup>

Plautus, Euripides, and other Greek and Roman dramatists and poets repeatedly used the same argument in defense of the views of their heroes. That mankind could be excused because the gods and goddesses were no better became a settled principle of the ancient religion. The vicious example of the gods thus became a wall across the way of a life of purity and holiness.<sup>2</sup>

Teaching the faith of a future life of rewards or punishments was no part of the popular religious instruction. The poets, it is true, indulged in romantic tales of an Elysium and a Tartarus, the ancient heaven and hell, but their views were uncertain and unsatisfactory, as to any specific doctrine of immortality. These impressions of the old writers are given in the saying of Ovid that of the four elements which constituted the human organization, "the earth covers the flesh; the shade flits around the tomb; the spirit seeks the stars."<sup>3</sup>

Thus did the poet express the prevailing idea that the composite man returned after death to the various elements of which he had been in the first place made up. In such a dim and shadowy belief there was no eternal hope for life, no lasting comfort at death. Alger to whom the world is in debt for a thorough study of the popular beliefs of all nations, ancient and modern, on the subject of the future life, has after a full and critical examination of the question come to the following conclusion:

"To the ancient Greek in general, death was a sad doom. When he lost a friend, he sighed a melancholy farewell after him to the faded shore of ghosts. Summoned himself, he departed with a lingering look at the sun and a tearful adieu to the bright day

<sup>1</sup> At quem Deum, qui templa cæli summa sonitu concutit;  
Ego homuncio hoc non facerem?

—Act iii, sc. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Warburton, "Divine Legation," B. II, sect. iv.

<sup>3</sup> Terra tegit carnem; tumulum circumvolat umbra; orcus habet manes; spiritus astra petit.



and the green earth. To the Roman, death was a grim reality. To meet it himself he girded up his loins with artificial firmness. But at its ravages among his friends, he wailed in anguished abandonment. To his dying vision there was indeed a future, but shapes of distrust and shadow stood upon its disconsolate borders; and when the prospect had no horror, he still shrank from the poppied gloom."<sup>1</sup>

As each nation advanced in refinement and intellectual culture, the priests, the poets, and the philosophers<sup>2</sup> aspired to a higher thought. They cherished the longing for and taught the consoling doctrine of an immortality, one not to be spent in shadowy and idle forms of existence but passed in everlasting enjoyment to compensate for the ills of life.

The necessary result of the growth of such pure and elevated notions must have been a contempt and an opposition to the absurd polytheism, the worship of many gods. But as this was the popular religion it was readily seen that any open attempt to overthrow it or to publicly advance opinions against it would be ventures full of danger. Whenever any religion, whether true or false, becomes the religion of a people, whoever opposes it or ridicules it or seeks to upset it, is sure to be accused by popular zeal and to be punished by popular bigotry.

Socrates was doomed to drink from the poisoned bowl on the charge that he taught the Athenian youth to worship not the gods approved and accepted for that purpose by the state, but new and generally unknown deities. Jesus was nailed to the cross because he taught a faith which, however pure, was new and evil to the old religion of his Jewish countrymen.

New religious truths among the pagan peoples were therefore hidden from common inspection and taught only in secret societies. Admission to these was obtained only through the tests of a painful initiation, and the doctrines were further concealed under the veil of symbols whose true meaning the initiated only could understand. "The truth," says Clemens of Alexandria,

<sup>1</sup> "Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life," p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> However, many of the philosophers were skeptics. The Stoics, for instance, and they were the leading sect, doubted the survival of the soul after the death of the body. If any of them admitted the possibility of its survival, they credited to it only a short stay before it is dissolved and absorbed into the universe. Seneca ("Troades," I, 397) says, "There is nothing after death, and death itself is nothing." *Post mortem nihil, est ipsaque mors nihil.*



"was taught involved in enigmas, symbols, allegories, metaphors, and tropes and figures."<sup>1</sup>

Such secret societies in which the principles of a new and purer knowledge of religion was taught have received in history the name of the MYSTERIES.

Each country had its Mysteries and these were peculiar to itself. In Egypt were those of Osiris and Isis; in Samothrace those of the Cabiri; in Greece they celebrated at Eleusis, near Athens, the Mysteries of Demeter; in Syria, of Adonis; in Phoenicia, of Dionysus; and in Persia those of Mithras, which were the last to perish after the advent of Christianity and the overthrow of polytheism, the belief in many gods and goddesses.

These Mysteries, although they differed in name and in some of the details of initiation, were essentially alike in general form and design. "Their end as well as nature," says Warburton, "was the same in all: to teach the doctrine of a future state."<sup>2</sup> Alger says: "The implications of the indirect evidence, the leanings and guidings of all the incidental clues now left us as to the real aim and purport of the Mysteries, combine to assure us that their chief teaching was a doctrine of a future life in which there should be rewards and punishments."<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Taylor, the Platonist<sup>4</sup> than whom no better modern authority on this subject could be cited, says that "the initiated were instructed in the doctrine of a state of future rewards and punishments,"<sup>5</sup> and that the greater Mysteries "obscurely intimated, by mystic and splendid visions, the felicity of the soul both here and hereafter, when purified from the defilements of a material nature and constantly elevated to the realities of intellectual vision."<sup>6</sup>

All the ancient writers who were living about the same time with these associations, and must have been familiar with their

<sup>1</sup> "Stromata," lib. v, p. 658.

<sup>2</sup> "Divine Legation," B. I, sect. iv, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> "Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life," p. 454.

<sup>4</sup> A follower of Plato and Socrates, believing in the immortality and pre-existence of the soul, that virtue rests upon discipline, that knowledge is not mere sensation or opinion but the understanding of reasons and causes.

<sup>5</sup> "Dissertation on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries," vol. viii, p. 40.

<sup>6</sup> See above "Dissertation," p. 53.



character, agree in the opinion that their design was to teach the doctrine of a future life of rewards and punishments.

Pindar, the Greek poet, who lived from 522 to 443 years before Christ, says, "Happy the man who descends beneath the hollow earth having beheld these Mysteries. He knows the end, he knows the divine origin of life."

Sophocles, the tragic poet of Athens, living from 495 to 406 years before Christ, says that "they are thrice happy who descend to the shades below, after having beheld these rites; for they alone have life in Hades, while all others suffer there every kind of evil."

And lastly, Isocrates, one of the ten great orators of Athens who lived in the period from 436 to 338 years before Christ, declares that "those who have been initiated in the Mysteries of Ceres entertain better hopes both as to the end of life and the whole of futurity."

Thus from all authorities it is evident that the great end and design of the initiation into these Mysteries was to teach the aspirant the doctrine of a future life. Not that aimless, uncertain and shadowy one outlined by the poets and doubtfully consented to by the people, but that pure and rational state of immortal existence in which the soul is purified from the dross of the body and elevated to eternal life. It was, in short, much the same in its spirit as the Christian and Masonic doctrine of the resurrection.

This lesson was taught in the Mysteries in a peculiar form. This method of presenting the instruction has in fact given rise to the theory we are now considering that they were the first and original source of Speculative Freemasonry. They were all dramatic in their ceremonies. Each one exhibited in a series of staged and scenic representations the adventures of some god or hero; the attacks upon him by his enemies; his death at their hands; his descent into Hades or the grave, and his final return to renewed life as a mortal, or his elevation as a god.

The only important difference between these various Mysteries was, that there was to each one a distinct and peculiar god or hero whose death and resurrection or apotheosis was the subject of the drama, and gave to its scenes the changes which were dependent on the adventures of him who was its main feature. Thus, in Samothrace, where the Mysteries of the Cabiri were



celebrated, it was Atys, the lover of Cybele, who was slain and restored; in Egypt it was Osiris whose death and resurrection were represented; in Greece it was Dionysus, and in Persia, Mithras.

In all of these ceremonies and tragedies the material points of the plot and the religious design of the sacred drama were the same. The dramatic form and the scenic representation of the allegory were everywhere preserved.

This dramatic form of the initiatory rites in the Mysteries—this acted allegory in which the doctrine of the resurrection was shadowed forth by the visible representation of some imagined event—was, as the learned Dr. Dollinger<sup>1</sup> has justly observed, “eminently calculated to take a powerful hold on the imagination and the heart, and to excite in the spectators alternately conflicting sentiments of terror and calmness, of sorrow and fear and hope.”

The Mysteries were a part of the doings of a secret society whose members were separated from the rest of the people by a ceremony of initiation. There resulted from this form of organization, as a necessary means of defense and of isolation, a solemn obligation of secrecy, with severe penalties for its violation, and certain modes of recognition known only to those who had been instructed in them.

There was what might be called a progressive order of degrees, for the neophyte, the novice or candidate, was not at once upon his initiation invested with a knowledge of the deepest secrets of the religious system.

Thus the Mysteries were divided into two classes called the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries. In addition to these, there was a preliminary ceremony which was only a beginning or introduction to the Mysteries proper. Thus there was in the process of reception a system of three steps which those who are fond of tracing analogies or comparisons between the ancient and the modern initiations are led to call degrees.

A brief review of these three steps of progress in the Mysteries will give the reader a very definite idea of the nature of this ancient system in which so many writers have thought that they had found the cradle of modern Freemasonry. Such a general survey of the situation will enable him to appreciate at their just

<sup>1</sup> “Jew and Gentile,” I, p. 136, Darnell’s translation.



value the similarities which these writers have found, as they suppose, between the two systems.

The first step was called the *Lustration*, or purification by water. When the neophyte or candidate was ready to be received into any of the ancient Mysteries, he was taken into the temple or other place set apart for the ceremony of initiation. There he had to undergo a thorough cleansing of the body by water. This was the preparation for reception into the Lesser Mysteries and it was symbolic of that purification of the heart that was absolutely necessary to prepare the aspirant for admission to a knowledge and a share in the sacred lessons which were afterwards to be given him.

Many have sought and still seek to find in this preparation ceremony an analogy or likeness to the first degree of Freemasonry. Such an analogy certainly exists, as will be seen, but the theory that the Apprentice's degree was suggested by and taken from the ceremony of *Lustration* in the Mysteries is wholly out of the question. This ceremony was not even peculiar to the Mysteries.

An ablution, lustration, or cleansing by water, as a religious rite was practiced among all the ancient nations. More especially was it observed among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. With the Hebrews the lustration was the first ceremony to every act of expiation, the sacrifice offered by the repentant, the sin-offering. Hence the Jewish prophets continually refer to the ablution of the body with water as a symbol of the purification of the heart.<sup>1</sup> Among the Greeks, lustration was always connected with their sacrifices. It consisted in the sprinkling of water by means of an olive or a laurel branch. The ceremony was more common with the Romans than the Greeks. Used not only as a sign or sacrifice showing repentance for crime, the Romans employed the ceremony to secure the blessing of the gods. Thus, fields were lustrated before the corn was put into the ground; colonies when they were first established, and armies before they proceeded to battle. At the end of every fifth year, the whole people were thus purified by a general lustration. Everywhere the rite was con-

<sup>1</sup> Washings of the body or the hands or the clothes or all of these as the first step of a religious ritual is often mentioned in the Bible. Note the 14th chapter of Leviticus. There is also the striking reference in Hebrews x, 22, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."



nected with the performance of sacrifice and with the idea of a moral purification, the washing away of evil.

The next step in the ceremonies of the ancient Mysteries was called the *Initiation*. Here the dramatic allegory was performed and the myth, or imagined history, developed on which the peculiar Mystery was founded. The neophyte, or initiate, personally took part in the supposed events of the life, the sufferings, and the death of the god or hero to whom the Mystery was dedicated, or he had them brought in a very realistic drama before him. These ceremonies formed a symbolic instruction in the *initia* — the beginnings — of the religious system which it was the object of the Mysteries to teach.

The ceremonies of initiation were performed partly in the Lesser, but more especially and more fully in the Greater Mysteries of which they were the first part and where only the allegory of death was shown. The Lesser Mysteries were introductory to the Greater and have been supposed by the theorists who maintain the connection between the Mysteries and Freemasonry to be similar to the Fellow Craft's degree of the latter institution.

There may be some ground for this comparison in a rather inexact way. Although the Lesser Mysteries were to some extent public, yet as they were, as Clemens of Alexandria<sup>1</sup> says, a certain groundwork of instruction and preparation for the things that were to follow they might perhaps be considered as being akin to the Fellow Craft's degree.

The third and last of the progressive steps or grades in the Mysteries was *Perfection*. That was the main object of the system. It was also called the *autopsy*, from a Greek word which means *seeing with one's own eyes*. It was the complete and finished communication to the neophyte of the great secret of the Mysteries; the secret for the preservation of which the system of initiation had been invented, and which during the whole course of that initiation had been symbolically shadowed forth.

Teaching and impressing this secret was in fact the explanation of the secret doctrine for which the Mysteries in every country had been instituted and the ceremony containing it was performed in the most sacred and private place of the temple or place of initiation.

<sup>1</sup> "Stromata," v, p. 424.



As the *autopsy* or *Perfection* of the Mysteries concluded the whole system, the maintainers of the doctrine that Freemasonry finds its origin in the Mysteries have compared this last step in the ancient initiation to the Master's degree. But the analogy or likeness between the two as a summing up of the secret doctrine is less to be seen in the Third Degree as it now exists than it was before the separation from it of the Royal Arch. Accepting, however, the Master's degree as it was constituted in the earlier part of the 18th century, the comparisons between that and the last stage of the Mysteries are certainly very interesting although not sufficient to prove the origin of the modern from the ancient systems. But of this more can be said when that development of degrees is studied in this work.

This view of the organization of the Pagan Mysteries would not be complete without some reference to the dramatized allegory which formed so important a part of the ceremony of initiation, and in connection with which the relation to Freemasonry has been most earnestly urged.

Already has it been said that the Mysteries were originally invented for the purpose of teaching two great religious truths which were unknown to or at least not recognized in the popular faith. These were the unity of God and the immortality of the soul. The former although illustrated at every point by expressed symbols, such for instance as the all-seeing eye, the eye of the universe, and the image of the Deity, was not put in the form of a drama or allegory, but taught as an abstract doctrine at the time of the *autopsy* or the close of the grade of *Perfection*. The other truth, the dogma of a future life, and of a resurrection from death to immortality, was presented to the candidate by an allegory. This was dramatized in much the same way in each of the Mysteries, although of course in each nation the person and the events which made up the allegory, were different. The interpretation was, however, always the same.

Egypt was the first country of antiquity to receive the germs of civilization and there the first Mysteries are supposed to have been invented.<sup>1</sup> Although the Eleusinian Mysteries, which

<sup>1</sup> The first and original Mysteries of which we have any account were those of Isis and Osiris in Egypt, from whence they were derived by the Greeks.—Warburton, "Divine Legation," I, p. 194. Diodorus says the same thing in the first book of his "History," I, xxxvii.

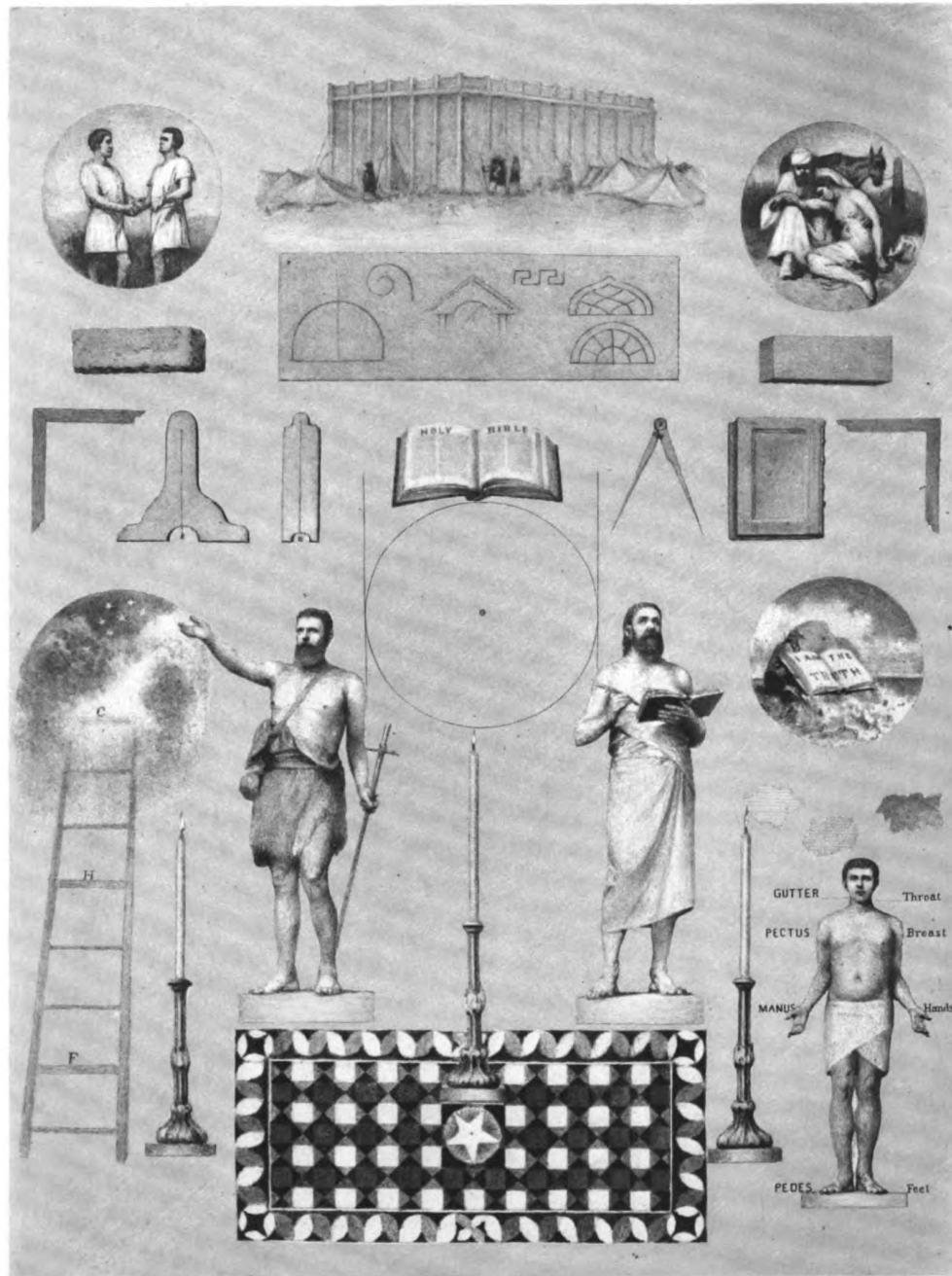


















were introduced into Greece long after the invention of the Osiriatic in Egypt, were more popular among the ancients, yet the Egyptian initiation exhibits more purely and more expressively the symbolic idea which was to be developed in the explaining of its allegory. We shall therefore select the Osiriatic, the most important of the Egyptian Mysteries, as the exemplar from which an idea may be obtained of the character of all the other Mysteries of Paganism.

The writers of antiquity, such as Plutarch, Diodorus Siculus, and Herodotus, state that the Egyptian Mysteries of Osiris, Isis, and Horus were the model of all the other systems of initiation that were afterwards established among the various peoples of the Old World. Indeed, the ancients held that the Demeter of the Greeks was identical with the Isis of the Egyptians, and Dionysus with Osiris. The adventures credited to these characters were certainly very similar.

The place of Osiris in Egyptian history is unknown to us. The fragments of Sanchoniathon speak of Osiris, the brother of Chna or Canaan; in the lists of Manetho, he is made the fifth king during the governing period of the demi-gods, being conjoined with Isis; but as the four preceding kings are named as Hephæstus, Helios, Agathodemon, and Kronos, the whole is evidently a mere mythological fable, and we have as far to seek as ever. Herodotus is not more satisfactory, for he says that Osiris and Isis were two great deities of the Egyptians. Banier, however, in his *Mythology* thinks that he was the same as Mizraim, the son of Cham, and grandson of Noah. Bishop Cumberland concurs in this and adds that Cham was the first king of Egypt, that Osiris was a title taken by him, signifying Prince, and that Isis was simply Ishah, his wife. Lastly, Diodorus Siculus says that he was Menes, the first king of Egypt. Some later writers have sought to identify Osiris and Isis with the Iswara and Isi of India. There is certainly a great deal of probability, if we may judge from the history of words, in this last guess.

Osiris had the reputation among the ancients of being present everywhere. This fact is best shown in some witty verses of Ausonius, wherein it is said that in Greece, at Eleusis, he was called Bacchus; the Egyptians thought that he was Osiris; the Mysians of Asia Minor named him Phœneus or Apollo; the



Indians supposed that he was Dionysus; the sacred rites of the Romans called him Liber; and the Arabians, Adonis.<sup>1</sup>

But the only thing that is of any interest to us in this connection is that Osiris was the hero of the earliest of the Mysteries, and that his death and apotheosis — his change from a mortal king to an immortal God — were symbols setting forth the doctrine of a future life.

His historical character was that of a mild and kindly ruler. He had introduced the arts of civilization among his subjects and had then traveled for three years for the purpose of extending them into other nations, leaving the government of his kingdom, during his absence, to his wife Isis. According to the legend, his brother Typhon had made a rival claim for the throne and his defeat had given birth to a feeling of ill-will. During the absence of Osiris, he, therefore, formed a secret agreement with some of his followers and friends to take the throne.

On the return of Osiris from his travels he was invited by Typhon to a banquet, apparently given in his honor, at which all the conspirators were present. During the feast Typhon produced a chest, inlaid with gold, and promised to present it to that person of the company whose body upon trial would be found most nearly to fit it. Osiris tried the experiment, but as soon as he had laid himself in the chest Typhon closed and nailed down the lid.

The chest was then thrown into the river Nile and it floated into the sea. After being for some time tossed upon the waves, the chest was cast ashore at the town of Byblos in Phœnicia and left at the foot of a Tamarisk tree. Isis, the wife of Osiris, overcome with grief for the loss of her husband, began a search for the body, being accompanied by her son Anubis and his nurse Nepthe.

After many adventures Isis arrived on the shores of Phœnicia and in the neighborhood of Byblos where she at length found the body at the foot of the Tamarisk tree. She returned with it to Egypt. The body was received by the people with great joy and

<sup>1</sup> *Ogygia me Bacchum vacat;  
Osin Egyptus putat;  
Mysi Phanacem nominant;  
Dionuson Indi existimant;  
Romana sacra Liberum;  
Arabica gens Adoneum.*

—Ausonius, Ep. 30.



it was proclaimed that Osiris had risen from the dead and had become a god.

The sufferings of Osiris, his death, his resurrection, and his later office as judge of the dead in a future state, formed the foundation principles of the Egyptian religion. They taught the secret doctrine of a future life. Initiation into the Mysteries of Osiris was initiation into the rites of the religion of Egypt. These rites were conducted by the priests, and into them many sages from other countries, especially from Greece, such as Herodotus, Plutarch, and Pythagoras, were initiated.

Thus it is supposed that the principles and general form of the Mysteries were conveyed into other countries, although they everywhere varied in the details. The most important of the Mysteries besides the Egyptian were those of Mithras in Persia, of Atys or of the Cabiri in Thrace, of Adonis in Syria, and of Dionysus in Greece. They extended even beyond the then more civilized parts of the world into the northern regions of Europe, where were practiced the Scandinavian rites of the Norsemen and the Druidical Mysteries of Gaul and Britain, though these were probably derived more directly from a very early Aryan<sup>1</sup> source.

Wherever they existed we find in them a remarkable unity of design and a similarity of ceremonies from which we are compelled to believe they had a common origin. We must also believe that the purity of the doctrines which they taught proves that this common origin can not be found in the popular religion of that time.

In all of the Mysteries the ceremonies of initiation were of a funereal type. They allegorized in a dramatic form the sufferings, the death, and the resurrection of some god or hero. There was a death, most generally by violence,<sup>2</sup> to symbolize, as certain interpreters of the Mysteries have supposed, the strife of certain opposing powers in nature, such as life and death, virtue and vice, light and darkness, or summer and winter.

The person thus slain was represented in the allegorical drama by the candidate. After his death the body was lost. This dis-

<sup>1</sup> Those who in the early history of the world came from Central Asia to people India and Europe, the parent stock of the Hindus, Persians, Greeks, Latins, Celts, Anglo-Saxons, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Thus Clemens of Alexandria describes the legend or allegory of the Cabiri Mysteries as the sacred mystery of a brother slain by his brethren, "frater trucidatus a fratribus."



appearance was called by the Greeks the *Aphanism*. Then there came a search for the body. This sad search, in which all the initiates joined, formed what Faber calls "the doleful part," and was followed by its discovery which was known as the *Heuresis*.<sup>1</sup> This was done with the greatest show of joy. The candidate was afterward instructed in the *Apporheta*, or secret dogmas of the Mysteries.

In all of the Pagan Mysteries this dramatic form of an allegory was preserved. We may readily see in the groans and lamentations on the death of the god or hero and the disappearance of the body a symbol of the death of man, just as we also see in the later rejoicings at his discovery and restoration, a symbol of the restoration of the spirit to eternal life.

Because of the purity of the lessons taught in the Mysteries and their regard for the elevated dogmas of the unity of God and the immortality of the soul, it is not surprising to read the praises passed upon them by the philosophers of old.

If the reader has carefully considered the allegorical drama which was represented in the ancient Mysteries, and compared it with the dramatic scenes forming the principal portion of the initiation in Freemasonry, he will be at no loss to account for the reasons leading so many writers to credit the origin of the Masonic system to these mystical associations of antiquity.

In fact it has been a favorite theory with several German, French, and British scholars to trace the origin of Freemasonry to the Mysteries of Paganism. Others, denying the claim that the modern association should have sprung from them, still find comparisons so remarkable between the two systems as to lead them to suppose that the Mysteries were an offshoot from the pure Freemasonry of the Patriarchs.

There is slight foundation if any in historical evidence to support either theory, although we must admit the existence of many things that are similar or closely akin in the two systems. These comparisons can, however, be easily explained without admitting any connection in the way of origin and descent between them.

<sup>1</sup> "Concerning Adonis, whom some call Osiris, there are two things remarkable: *Aphanismos*, the death or loss of Adonis; and *Heuresis*, the finding of him again."—Godevyn in "Moses and Aaron," lib. iv, c. 2.



Hutchinson and Oliver are the leading supporters of the theory that the Mysteries were an offshoot or imitation of the pure Freemasonry of the Patriarchs.

Hutchinson strongly contends for the direct derivation of Freemasonry from Adam, through the line of the Patriarchs to Moses and Solomon, but he does not deny that it borrowed much more from the initiations and symbols of the Pagans.

He unhesitatingly says, that "there is no doubt that our ceremonies and Mysteries were derived from the rites, ceremonies, and institutions of the ancients, and some of them from the remotest ages."<sup>1</sup>

Lest the purity of the genuine patriarchal Freemasonry should be made foul by borrowing its ceremonies from such an impure source, he proceeds later on to describe, in that indefinite manner which was the peculiarity of his style, the separation of a purer class from the taint of the popular religion, where he evidently refers to the Mysteries. Thus he says:

"In the corruption and ignorance of after ages, those hallowed places<sup>2</sup> were polluted with idolatry; the unenlightened mind mistook the type for the original, and could not discern the light from darkness; the sacred groves and hills became the objects of enthusiastic bigotry and superstition; the devotees bowed down to the oaken log and the graven image as being divine. Some preserved themselves from the corruptions of the times, and we find those sages and select men to whom were committed, and who retained, the light of understanding and truth, unpolluted with the sins of the world, under the denomination of Magi among the Persians; wise men, soothsayers, and astrologers among the Chaldeans; philosophers among the Greeks and Romans; Brahmins among the Indians; Druids and bards among the Britons; and with the people of God, Solomon shone forth in the fullness of human wisdom."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Oliver expresses almost the same views, but more plainly. He was probably the first to advance the theory that two systems of Freemasonry had come down the course of time, both derived from a common source. These two systems he called the Pure

<sup>1</sup> "Spirit of Masonry," lecture ii, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> "The highest hills and lowest valleys."

<sup>3</sup> "Spirit of Masonry," lecture iv, p. 59.



and the Spurious Freemasonry of antiquity — the former descending without a halt from the Patriarchs and especially from Noah, and being the parent of that which is now practiced, and the latter being a schism or separation, as it were, from the former and impure and corrupted in its principles, and in that tainted or soiled condition preserved in the Pagan Mysteries. Dr. Oliver admits, however, that there were certain analogies or similarities between the two in their symbols and allegories. His own language on this subject leaves no doubt of the nature of his views. In a note to his *History of Initiation*, an extended and learned work on certain of these Mysteries, he says:

“I have denominated the surreptitious initiations *earth-born*, in contra-distinction to the purity of Freemasonry, which was certainly derived from above; and to those who contend that Freemasonry is nothing more than a miserable relic of the idolatrous Mysteries (see Faber, *Origin of Pagan Idolatry*, vol. III, p. 190), I would reply, in the words of an inspired apostle, ‘Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree bear olive berries or a vine figs? So can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, full of mercy and good fruits’ (James iii, 11, 12, 17). I wish to be distinct and intelligible on this point, as some misapprehensions are afloat respecting the immediate object of my former volume of *Signs and Symbols*; and I have been told that the arguments there used afford an indirect sanction to the opinion that Freemasonry is derived from the Mysteries. In answer to this charge, if it requires one, I only need reply to the general tenor of that volume, and to declare explicitly my firm opinion, founded on intense study and abstruse research, that the science which we now denominate Speculative Masonry, was co-eval, at least, with the creation of our globe, and the far-famed Mysteries of idolatry were a subsequent institution founded on similar principles, with the design of conveying unity and permanence to the false worship, which it otherwise could never have acquired.”<sup>1</sup>

No other prominent Masonic writer holds and argues for the theory of the common origin but diverse descent of the Mysteries and Freemasonry, although there are many brethren agree-

<sup>1</sup>“History of Initiation,” lecture i, p. 13, notes.



ing with the fullest faith to the teachings of Dr. Oliver as a Masonic historian and therefore give their assent to his opinion on this subject.

Another class of Masonic scholars have advanced the theory that the Speculative Freemasonry of the present day comes directly from and is a lawful and logical successor of the Mysteries of antiquity. They found this theory on the very many and striking analogies that are to be found in the organization, the design, and the symbols of the two systems. These likenesses they claim can only be explained with any satisfaction on the ground that the one is an offshoot from the other.

The Abbé Robin was perhaps the first writer who advanced this idea in a distinct form. In a work on the Ancient and Modern Initiations,<sup>1</sup> published in 1780, he traces the origin of the ancient systems of initiation to that early period when wicked men urged by the terror of guilt sought among the virtuous for those who could plead for them with the Deity. The latter, he says, retired into solitary places to avoid the taint of the growing sinfulness and devoted themselves to a life of study and to the cultivation of the arts and sciences. In order to associate with them in their labors and functions only such as had sufficient merit and capacity, they appointed strict courses of trial and examination. This, he thinks, must have been the source of the initiations which marked and made so distinct the celebrated Mysteries of antiquity. The Magi of Chaldea, the Brahmins and Gymnosophists of India, the Priests of Egypt, and the Druids of Gaul and Britain, thus lived in retired places and obtained great fame by their discoveries in astronomy, chemistry, and mechanics, by the purity of their morals, and by their knowledge of the science of legislation.

In these schools, says the abbé, the first sages and legislators of antiquity were assembled, where the doctrines taught were the unity of God and the immortality of the soul, and it was from these Mysteries that the lively fancy of the Greeks drew much of their mythology. From these ancient initiations the abbé draws the conclusion that there came the orders of Chivalry which sprang into existence in the Middle Ages, and certain branches of these in his opinion produced the institution of Freemasonry.

<sup>1</sup> "Recherches sur les Initiations Anciennes et Modernes."



The theory of the Abbé Robin therefore traces the institution of Masonry to the ancient Mysteries, but in an indirect way through the orders of Chivalry. He might therefore more correctly be classed among those who maintain the doctrine of the Templar origin of Freemasonry.

Alexander Lenoir, the French scholar who made an especial study of ancient remains and relics, attempted in the most plain and thorough manner to establish the doctrine of the direct descent of Freemasonry from the ancient Mysteries, and especially from the Egyptian. In the year 1814 he published an elaborate work on this subject.<sup>1</sup> He begins by claiming that we can not expect to find in the Egyptian and Greek initiations those modes of recognition which are used by the Freemasons of the present day, because these methods which are only formal and had been sent from one to another by a mouth-to-ear method under the obligation of secrecy can not be known to us, for they could not have come down to us through the lapse of ages.

Omitting, therefore, all reference to these as matters of no real importance, he confines himself to a comparison of the Masonic with the ancient rites of initiation. He comes to the conclusion that Freemasonry in all the points that it really covers is in direct relation with the Mysteries of the ancient world, and that with the exception of certain particular customs practiced by the modern Freemasons, it is evident that Freemasonry in no respect differs from the ancient initiations of the Egyptians and the Greeks.

This theory has been accepted by nearly all the French Masonic writers except Rebold who traces Freemasonry to the Roman Colleges of Artificers.

Unfortunately for the general acceptance of this theory, M. Lenoir has in the first place drawn his comparisons from the system of ceremonies of initiation practiced in the lodges of France, and especially from the "proofs and trials" of the Entered Apprentice's degree. But the tedious ceremonies and painful trials of the candidate as they are practiced in the French Rite constitute no part of the original English Freemasonry whence

<sup>1</sup>"La Franche-Maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine, ou l'antiquité de la Franche-Maçonnerie prouvée par l'explication des mystères anciens et modernes." (Freemasonry back to its true origin, or the antiquity of Freemasonry proved by the explanation of ancient and modern mysteries.) By M. Alexandre Lenoir. Paris.



the French system had its start and were adopted as a novel change long after the establishment of the Order in France by the Grand Lodge of England.

Moreover, the Egyptian initiations with which they have been compared by Lenoir were not those which were actually practiced by the priests of Egypt. At least we have no authentic proof of that claim. They were most probably suggested by the imaginative details given by the Abbé Terrasson in his romance entitled *Sethas*, in which he pretends to show the initiation of an Egyptian prince.

The truth is that Lenoir and those writers who have followed him and adopted his theory have not made a comparison between the original ceremonies of Masonic initiation and those of the ancient Mysteries. What they have done is merely a comparison between a recent system of ceremonies, certainly not earlier than the middle of the 18th century, and a fiction indebted for its birth to the inventive genius of a French abbé, and first set forth in a work published by him in the year 1731.

As well might Mr. Turner or any other writer on Anglo-Saxon history have cited, as authentic materials for his description of the customs of the people of that age, the romantic incidents given by Sir Walter Scott in his novel of *Ivanhoe*.

Therefore, all the references of the *voyages* of an Entered Apprentice in a French Lodge to the similar travels of an Aspirant in the Mysteries of Osiris or Isis become nothing more than "the baseless fabric of a vision," which must fade and dissolve like an "insubstantial pageant" when submitted to the severe test of authentic historical investigation.<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Mr. King, the author of a very interesting treatise on the Gnostics,<sup>2</sup> has advanced a theory much more probable than either of those which we have just examined. He maintains that some of the Pagan Mysteries, especially those of Mithras, which had been instituted in Persia, extended beyond the period of the

<sup>1</sup> "Many of the explanations given as to the ceremonies used in Egyptian initiations are modern inventions, abounding in absurdities and purely imaginary."—Tho. Pryer, "On the Study of Masonic Antiquities," in *Freemasons' Quarterly Review*, 1847, p. 262. Wilkinson was of the same opinion. See "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians," vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> "The Gnostics and Their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval." By C. W. King, M. A., London, 1865, p. 47, and following pages. The Gnostics of the 1st to 6th centuries had a system of religion and philosophy teaching that knowledge rather than faith was the key to salvation.



coming of Christianity, and that their doctrines and customs were adopted by the secret societies which existed at an early period in Europe and which finally assumed the form of Freemasonry. This theory is a probable one and this is so because its main points are sustained by historical evidence.

For instance, it is a fact that some of the Mysteries of Paganism were practiced in Europe long after the beginning of the Christian era. They were a constant menace in the opinion of the fathers of the church who feared and fought what they supposed to be their tendency to idol worship. Not until the middle of the 5th century were they forbidden by an edict of the Emperor Theodosius. But a law against a common practice is not necessarily nor always followed by an end at once of the thing forbidden.

The public celebration of the Mysteries must of course have stopped at once when such ceremony had been declared unlawful. But a private and secret observance of them may have continued and probably did continue for an indefinite time, perhaps even to as late a period as the end of the 5th or the beginning of the 6th century.

Mosheim tells us that in the 4th century notwithstanding the zeal and severity of the Christian emperors, there still remained in several places, and especially in the distant provinces, temples and religious rites sacredly set apart to the Pagan gods; that rites founded in honor of them were in the 5th century celebrated with the utmost freedom and fearlessness in the Western empire; and that even in the 6th century remains of the Pagan worship were to be found among the learned and the officers of state.<sup>1</sup>

During all this time it is known that secret associations such as the Roman Colleges of Artificers existed in Europe, and that from them ultimately sprang up the organizations of Builders which with Como in Lombardy as their center spread over Europe in the Middle Ages, and whose members under the recognized name of *Traveling Freemasons*, were the founders of Gothic architecture.

There is no forced or unnatural succession from them to the Gilds of Operative Masons who undoubtedly gave rise about the end of the 17th or the beginning of the 18th century to the Specu-

<sup>1</sup> Mosheim, "Ecclesiastical History," Macclaine's Translation, vol. i, pp. 251, 332, 401.



lative Order or the Free and Accepted Masons which is the organization that exists at the present day.

There is, therefore, nothing absolutely unreasonable in the theory that the Mithraic Mysteries which prevailed in Europe until the 5th or perhaps the 6th century may have impressed some influence on the ritual, form, and character of the association of early Builders. It is equally within the bounds of reason that this influence may have extended to the Traveling Freemasons, the Operative Gilds, and finally to the Free and Accepted Masons, since it can not be proved that there was other than an unbroken chain of succession and affiliation between these various organizations.

Certainly, the theory of Mr. King ought not to be rejected offhand. It may not be altogether true but it has so many elements of truth that it claims our serious consideration.

After all, we may find a sufficient explanation of the likeness and the relationship which undoubtedly exists between the rites of the ancient Mysteries and those of the modern Freemasons in the natural tendency of the human mind to develop its ideals in the same way when these ideas are suggested by the same or similar circumstances. The fact that both institutions have taught the same lessons by the same method of instruction may be credited not to a direct and continued series of organizations, each one a link leading to another in a long chain, but rather to a natural and usual meeting place coincidence of human thought.

Believers in the lineal and direct descent of Freemasonry from the ancient Mysteries have of course discovered, or thought that they had discovered, the most striking and wonderful agreement and sameness between the internal organizations of the two institutions. Thus we find those inclined to believe upon slight evidence have not hesitated to compare the *Hieroplant*, or the Explainer of the sacred rites in the Mysteries, with the *Worshipful Master* in a Masonic Lodge, nor to style the *Dadouchos*, or Torch-Bearer, and the *Hieroceryx*, or Herald of the Mysteries, *Wardens*, nor to assign to the *Epibomos*, or Altar-Server, the title and duties of a *Deacon*.

That there are likenesses between them, and that many of these are very curious, can not be denied. But we shall attempt,



before leaving this subject, to explain the reason of their existence in a more rational way than by tracing the modern system as a successor to that of the ancients though we may have fallen heir to some of their possessions in ideals and in ritual.

Analogies or similarities certainly exist between the ancient Mysteries and Freemasonry upon which the theory of the descent of the one from the other has been based. These likenesses that remind the followers of one of their possible relationship to the other consist in the facts that both were secret societies, that both taught the same doctrine of a future life, and that both made use of symbols and allegories and a dramatic form of instruction. These analogies do not necessarily support the doctrine of descent but may be otherwise satisfactorily explained.

Whether the belief in a personal immortality was given to the first man by a divine revelation, and then lost as the intellectual state of future generations declined into a degraded state of religious understanding; or whether the prehistoric man, created but little superior to the wild beast with whom he daily fought with rude weapons for mastery, was at first without any idea of his future until it had by chance dawned upon some more elevated intellect and by him been revealed to his fellows as a consoling doctrine, afterward to be lost, and then in the course of time to be again recovered but not to be universally accepted by dull minds, are questions into which we need not enter here.

Sufficient is it to know that there has been no period in the world's history however dark in which some bright rays of this doctrine have not been thrown upon the general gloom. Belief in a future life and an immortal destiny has always been so inseparably linked with elevated notions of God that the deep and reverent thinkers in all ages have necessarily subscribed to its truth. That faith has inspired the verses of poets and tempered and directed the discussions of philosophers.

Both the Mysteries of the ancients and the Freemasonry of the moderns were religious institutions. Therefore the conceptions of the true nature of God which they taught to their disciples must of course have included the ideas of a future life, for the one doctrine naturally and surely follows the other. To seek, therefore, in this analogy the proof of a descent of the modern from the ancient institution is to advance an utter fallacy.



The two things are quite different and while both organizations may have taught the same truths that does not prove that the one body was parent of the other.

As to the secret character of the two institutions, the argument is equally doubtful. Under the dark rule of Pagan idolatry the doctrine of a future life was not the popular belief. Yet there were also some who aspired to a higher thought—philosophers like Socrates and Plato nourished with earnest longing the hope of immortality. By such men the Mysteries were first organized and it was for instruction in such a doctrine that they were instituted. But opposed as this doctrine was to the general current of popular thought, it became, necessarily and defensively, esoteric and exclusive. Here we see the reason for the secret character of the Mysteries. "They were kept secret," says Warburton, "from a necessity of teaching the initiated some things improper to be communicated to all."<sup>1</sup> The learned bishop assigns another reason, which he sustains with the authority of ancient writers, for this secrecy. "Nothing," he says, "excites our curiosity like that which retires from our observation, and seems to forbid our search."<sup>2</sup>

Synesius, who lived in the 4th century, before the Mysteries were wholly abolished, says that they owed the high respect in which they were held to a popular ignorance of their nature.<sup>3</sup>

And Clemens of Alexandria, referring to the secrecy of the Mysteries, accounts for it among other reasons because the truth seen through a veil appears greater and more venerable.<sup>4</sup>

Freemasonry also teaches the doctrine of a future life. But although there was no necessity, as in the Pagan Mysteries, to conceal this doctrine from the populace; yet there is for the reasons that have just been assigned a tendency in the human heart which has always existed to clothe the most sacred subjects with the veil of mystery. This spirit caused Jesus to speak to the Jewish multitudes in parables whose meaning his disciples, like the initiates of Freemasonry, were to understand but which would

<sup>1</sup> "Divine Legation," I, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> "Divine Legation," I, p. 200.

<sup>3</sup> "De Providentia."

<sup>4</sup> "Stromata," v, p. 419.



be without their full meaning to the people so that "seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."

The Mysteries and Freemasonry were both secret societies, not necessarily because the one was the legitimate successor of the other, but because both were human institutions and both had the same human tendency to conceal what was sacred from the uninitiated eyes and ears of the profane. In this way may be explained the analogy between the two institutions which arises from their secret character and their esoteric methods of instruction.

The symbolic form of teaching the doctrines is another analogy which may be readily explained. When once the esoteric or secret system was determined upon, or adopted without intent by the force of those tendencies to which we have referred, it was but natural that the secret instruction should be given by a method of symbolism. In all ages symbols have been the cipher or secret writing, an alphabet of hidden ideas by which secret associations of every character have privately limited the knowledge of their mysteries for the benefit of their initiates only.

Again, in the Mysteries, the essential doctrine of a resurrection from death to eternal life was always taught in a dramatic form. There was a drama in which the aspirant or candidate for initiation represented, or there was visibly pictured to him, the death by violence and then the discovery, recovery, revival and the ascension, raising or elevation — the resurrection to life and immortality of some god or hero, in whose honor the peculiar mystery was founded. Hence in all the Mysteries there were the *Thanatos*, the death or slaying of the victim; the *Aphanism*, the concealment or burial of the body by the slayers; and the *Heuresis*, the finding of the body by the initiates. This drama, from the character of the plot, began with sorrow and ended with joy.

The traditional "*Heureka*" [I have found it], sometimes credited to Pythagoras when he discovered the forty-seventh problem, and sometimes to Archimedes when there flashed upon his studious mind the principle of specific gravity, was nightly repeated to the initiates when, at the close of the drama of the Mysteries, they unearthed the hidden body of the Master.



Now the recognized fact that this mode of teaching a religious or a philosophical idea by a dramatic representation was constantly practiced in the ancient world for the purpose of more permanently impressing the understanding of it upon the mind would naturally lead to its adoption by all associations where the same lesson was to be taught as that which was the subject of the Mysteries. The tendency to dramatize an allegory is universal because the dramatic method is the most generally possible and has been proved to be the most successful.

The plan of the Third or Master's degree of Freemasonry is, as respects the subject and the development of the plot and the conduct of the scenes, the same as the drama of the ancient Mysteries. There is the same *Thanatos*, or death; the same *Aphanism*, or concealment of the body; and the same *Heuresis*, or discovery of it. The drama of the Master's degree begins in sorrow and ends in joy. Everything is so similar that we at once recognize an analogy between Freemasonry and the ancient Mysteries. But it has already been explained that this analogy is the result of natural causes and by no means infers a descent of the modern from the ancient institution.

Another analogy between the Mysteries and Freemasonry is the division of both into steps, classes, or degrees — call them what you may — which is to be found in both. The arrangement of the Masonic system into three degrees certainly bears a resemblance to the distribution of the Mysteries into the three steps of Preparation, Initiation, and Perfection which have been heretofore described.

But this likeness of the one to the other, remarkable as it may at first view appear, is really an accidental sameness which in no way proves historical connection between the two institutions.

In every system of instruction, whether open or secret, there must be a gradual and not a quick jump to a full understanding of that which is intended to be taught. The ancient adage that "no one suddenly becomes wicked" might with equal truth be read that "no one suddenly becomes learned." There is indeed, as was said of old, no royal road to knowledge. There must be a series of slow toiling steps to the desired end in every pursuit of knowledge, like the advancing ranks of an attacking army in its efforts to capture a besieged city. Hence the ladder with its



various steps has from the earliest times been accepted as a symbol of moral or intellectual progress from a lower to a higher place.

During this progress from the simplest to the most profound secrets of initiation — from the sowing of the seed to the full harvest of the instruction whereby the mind was to be gradually cleansed of many errors, by preparatory steps, before it could bear the full blaze of truth — both the Mysteries and Freemasonry have obeyed a common law of intellectual growth, independently of any connection of the one with the other institution.

The fact that there existed in both institutions secret means of the members knowing each other presents another analogy. It is known that in the Mysteries, as in Freemasonry, there was a solemn pledge of secrecy, with penalties for its violation, which referred to certain methods of recognition known only to the initiates. But this may properly be credited to the fact that such peculiarities are and always will be attached to any secret organization, whether religious, social, or political. We shall find in every secret society that is separated from the rest of mankind, as a natural outgrowth of its secrecy and as a necessary means of defense and isolation, an obligation of secrecy and methods of recognition. Such comparisons it is, therefore, scarcely worth while to discuss at length.

Thus, then, we have traced the resemblance between the ancient Mysteries and modern Freemasonry in the following points of their likeness:

1. The *Preparation*, which in the Mysteries was called the *Lustration*. This was the first step in the Mysteries and is the Entered Apprentice's degree in Freemasonry. In both systems the candidate was purified for the reception of truth by washing. In one it was a physical ablution or bath; in the other it was a moral cleansing; but in both the symbolic idea was the same.

2. The *Initiation*, which in the ancient system was partly in the Lesser Mysteries, but more especially in the Greater. In Freemasonry it is partly in the Fellow Craft's, but more especially in the Master's degree.

3. The *Perfection*, which in the Mysteries was the making known to the aspirant of the true dogma — the great secret that is symbolized by the *Initiation*. In Freemasonry it is the



same. The dogma so taught in the Mysteries and in Freemasonry is in both cases the same. This *Perfection* came in the Mysteries at the end of the Greater Mysteries. In Freemasonry it is at the close of the Master's degree. In the Mysteries the instruction was made known to the candidate in the *sacellum* or holiest place. In Freemasonry it is made in the Master's Lodge which is said to represent the Holy of Holies of the Temple.

4. The secret character of both institutions was featured.
5. The free use of symbols to teach and to remind the initiates in each organization of important lessons.
6. The dramatic form of the initiation common to the Mysteries and to Freemasonry.
7. The division of both systems into degrees or steps representing the stages of progress.
8. And, the adoption by the two organizations of secret methods of recognition.

These analogies, it must be admitted, are very striking, and if considered merely as accidental coincidences must be acknowledged to be very singular.

Thus we see it is not surprising that scholars have found it difficult to solve the following problems:

Does modern Freemasonry succeed by a direct and unhalting line of descent to the ancient Mysteries, the succession coming through the Mithraic initiations which existed in the 5th and 6th centuries? Does the fact of the analogies between the two systems be fully explained by crediting the resemblances to the coincidence of a natural process of human thought, common to all minds and showing its growth in symbolic forms?

We can only offer what we think is a logical conclusion. If both the Mysteries and Freemasonry have taught the same lessons by the same method of instruction, this has arisen not from a succession of organizations, each one a link of a long chain of historical happenings leading directly one to another until Hiram is simply a substitute for Osiris, but rather from those usual and natural coincidences or similarities of human thought which are to be found in every age and among all peoples.

However, we cannot easily deny that the founders of the Speculative system of Freemasonry in forming their ritual, especially of the Third Degree, gained many suggestions as to the



form and character of their funereal legend from a study of the rites of the ancient initiations if they did not indeed fall heir to them by actual descent.

How long it was after Freemasonry had an organized existence that this funereal legend was arranged in final form for adoption and use is quite another matter which will be found discussed in its proper place in this work.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

### DRUIDISM AND FREEMASONRY



RESTON, in commencing his history of Freemasonry in England, asserts that there are convincing proofs that the science of Freemasonry was not unknown to the early Britons even before the time of the invasion of the Romans. Therefore he suggests the probability that the Druids, that ancient order of religious priests in Britain and Gaul, retained among them many usages similar to those of Freemasons; but he candidly admits that this is a mere guess.<sup>1</sup>

Hutchinson thinks it probable that many of the rites and institutions of the Druids were used in forming the ceremonies of the Masonic society.<sup>2</sup>

Paine who probably knew, by the way, as little of Freemasonry as he did of the religion of the Druids, positively asserts that "Masonry is the remains of the religion of the ancient Druids, who, like the Magi of Persia and the priests of Heliopolis in Egypt, were priests of the sun."<sup>3</sup>

The learned Faber, a much better qualified authority than Paine, offers the opinion that the Druidical Bards, those minstrel poets who sang or recited the great deeds of heroes, "are probably the real founders of English Freemasonry."<sup>4</sup>

Godfrey Higgins, whose inventive genius, fertile imagination, and exceeding confidence in the weakest of evidence render his great work, the *Anacalypsis*, altogether unreliable, says that he has "no doubt that the Masons were Druids, Culidei, or Chaldei, and Casideans."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Illustrations of Masonry," B. IV, sec. i, p. 121, Oliver's edition.

<sup>2</sup>"Spirit of Masonry," lecture iii, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup>"Essay on Freemasonry," p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>"Pagan Idolatry."

<sup>5</sup>"Anacalypsis," vol. i, p. 718.



Dr. Oliver, it is true, denies that the Freemasons of the present day were derived from the Druids. He thinks that the latter were a branch of what he calls the Spurious Freemasonry, which was a secession from the Pure Freemasonry of the Patriarchs. But he finds many analogies in the rites and symbols of the two institutions which indicate their common origin from an earlier system, namely, the ancient Mysteries of the Pagans.

The theory of those who find a connection either in analogy or by succession between the Druids and the Freemasons, accounts for this likeness or descent, as the case may be, by supposing that the Druids received their system either from Pythagoras or from the ancient Mysteries through the Phœnicians, who visited Britain at an early period for commercial purposes.

Before we can profitably discuss the relations of Druidism to Freemasonry, or be prepared to determine whether there were any association whatever between the two, it will be necessary to give a brief sketch of the history and character of the former. This is a topic which, outside of any Masonic reference, is not without interest.

Of all the institutions of antiquity, there is none with which we are less acquainted than that of the Druidism of Britain and Gaul. Recent investigations of expert students of the old relics and remains have tended to cast much doubt on the guesses of the writers of the 17th and 18th centuries. Stukely, for instance, one of the most learned of those who have sought to build out of the stone monuments of England a connected history of Druidism, has been said by Fergusson, in his work on *Rude Stone Monuments*, to have been indebted more to a lively imagination than to trustworthy facts for the theory which he has attempted to establish.

The skepticism of Fergusson is, however, not less objectionable in a critical inquiry than the extreme belief of Stukely. There is evidently a middle way between them.

Fergusson can not deny the existence of Druids in Gaul and Britain since the fact is stated by Cæsar. He supposes that there were two distinct races in the island; the original inhabitants, who were of Turanian origin, and, being more uncivilized, were driven by the other race, who were Celts, into the



fastnesses of the Welsh hills long before the Roman invasion. Among the former people he thinks that the religion of Druidism, consisting of tree and serpent worship, may have been practiced. And he accounts for the error of the classical writers in describing the priests of the latter race as Druids by crediting it to the mixing up of the two races by the "uncritical Romans."<sup>1</sup>

More recently a bold and very skeptical theory has been advanced by Dr. Ignaz Goldziehr, in his work on *Mythology among the Hebrews*,<sup>2</sup> which aims to absolutely destroy Druidism as a system of secret initiation among the ancient Britons (whose Druidism was only a national religion). Thus he credits its invention to the modern Welsh who he believes created it for the purpose of elevating and strengthening their own nationality in their rivalry with the English. He says:

"The Cymri of Wales, becoming alive to the opposition in nationality between themselves and the English, felt the need of finding a justification of this opposition in the oldest prehistoric times. It was then first suggested to them that they were descendants of the ancient, renowned Celtic nation; and to keep alive this Celtic national pride they introduced an institution of New Druids, a sort of secret society like the Freemasons. The New Druids, like the old ones, taught a sort of national religion which, however, the people having long become Christian and preserved no independent national traditions, they had mostly to invent themselves. Thus arose the so-called Celtic mythology of the god Hu and the goddess Ceridolu (Ceridwen), etc.—mere poetical fictions which never lived in popular belief."

The questions involved in this difference of opinion are not critically and completely decided. We shall therefore content ourselves with giving the views of the history and religion of the Druids as they have been generally received and believed, without confusing the subject with the contending speculations which have been fostered by the too ready confidence and faith or the mere imagination of one side and attacked by the skepticism of the other.

<sup>1</sup>"Tree and Serpent Worship," p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>Able translated from the German by Russell Martineau, of the British Museum, with valuable additions. For the passage quoted, see p. 252 of the book in question.



The word *Druids* means workers in magic, having more than the usual human powers over nature.<sup>1</sup> They were the priests of the religion of the ancient Britons among whom they exercised almost unlimited influence and authority. They presided over and directed the education of the youths; they decided without appeal all legal differences; they were freed from all taxes and law charges; and whoever refused to submit to their decisions on any question was subjected to being expelled from among the faithful, by which he was forbidden access to the altars or the taking part in religious rites, and could not associate with his relatives, his friends, or his countrymen. No superstition was ever more terrible than that of the priest-ridden Britons.<sup>2</sup>

The Druids were under the chief authority of an Archdruid whose office was held for life, but to which he was in the first place elected by a council of priests, who continued as his advisers. The priesthood was divided into three orders, the highest being the *Druids*, and below these were the *Prophets* and the *Vates* or *Bards*. They held an annual assembly, at which disputed questions were decided and new laws were made or old ones repealed. They held also four quarterly meetings, on the days of the equinoxes and the solstices.<sup>3</sup>

They permitted none of their doctrines or ceremonies to be committed to common writing, but used a secret cipher to conceal them. This, Cæsar says, consisted of the letters of the Greek alphabet; a statement by no means probable since it would infer a knowledge by them of the Greek language, a matter of which we have no evidence.

The view of Toland is more likely to be true. He supposes that the characters used were those of the Irish *Ogum* alphabet. Sir James Ware, who wrote in Latin, about the middle of the 17th century, a work on the *Antiquities of Ireland*, says that "the ancient Irish, besides the vulgar characters, used also various occult

<sup>1</sup> In Anglo-Saxon *dry* is a magician; and *drycroft*, magic.

<sup>2</sup> Hittell, "A History of Mankind," vol. II, p. 323, and Toland, "A History of the Druids," quote Cæsar on the authority of the Druidical priesthood thus: "If any person, either public or private, does not acquiesce in their decisions, they (the Druids) interdict him from their sacrifices. This is among them the severest punishment. They who are thus interdicted are reckoned impious and accursed; all men depart from them; all shun their company and conversation, lest they sustain some misfortune from their contagion; the administration of justice and the protection of the laws is denied them, and no honor is conferred on them."

<sup>3</sup> About March 21 and September 22, and June 21 and December 22.



or artificial forms of writing, called *Ogum*, in which they wrote their secrets"; and he adds that he himself was in possession of an ancient book or parchment filled with these characters.<sup>1</sup>

Their places of worship were, according to the writings in that very period of Cæsar and Tacitus, in sacred groves. Stukely and other scholars of that class of study suppose that the great stone monuments found in Britain, such as at Stonehenge and Avebury, were Druidical temples, but Fergusson denies this and asserts that "there is no passage in any classical author which connects the Druids either directly or indirectly with any stone temples or stones of any sort."<sup>2</sup> The question remains unsettled, but the position taken by Fergusson seems to be supported by strong evidence.

Their worship, like that of the ancient Mysteries, was accompanied by a secret initiation. Their doctrines were made known only to the initiated who were strictly forbidden to expose them to the profane.

What were the precise forms of this initiation it is impossible to say. The Druids themselves, wedded to their oral or purely memory, mouth-to-ear, system of instruction, have left no records. But Dr. Oliver, depending on inferences that he has drawn from the Welsh triads, from the poem of the ancient bard Taleisin, and some other Cambrian authorities, aided by the inventive genius of his own imagination, has afforded us a very minute, if not altogether accurate, detail of these initiatory ceremonies. The account is entirely too long for reproduction, but a summary of it will not be uninteresting.<sup>3</sup>

Previous to admission to the first degree, or that of the *Vates*, the candidate was given a careful preparation, which in especial cases extended to the long period of twenty years.

The ceremony of initiation began by placing the candidate in the *pastos*, chest or coffin, in which he remained enclosed for three days, to represent death, and was liberated or restored to life on the third day.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Antiquitæ Hibernica," cap. 2.

<sup>2</sup>"Rude Stone Monuments," p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>"History of Initiation," lecture viii, p. 199 and following pages.

<sup>4</sup>"History of Initiation," p. 201. That this ceremony represented death and resurrection is altogether conjectural.



The sanctuary or temple being now prepared for the business of initiation, the Druids are duly arranged, being appropriately clothed and crowned with the evergreen ivy. The candidate, representing a blind man, is then introduced while a hymn to the Sun is chanted. He is placed under the care of an officer whose duty it is to receive him in the land of rest, and he is directed to kindle the fire under the cauldron of Ceridwen, the Druidical goddess. A procession in dramatic style is then formed and the candidate makes a circumambulation of nine times around the sanctuary, in circles from east to west by the south. The procession is first slow and amid a death-like silence; at length the pace increases to a rapid and furious motion, accompanied with the clash and clang of noisy instruments and the screams of harsh and discordant voices reciting in verse the praises of those heroes who were brave in war, courteous in peace, and patrons of religion.<sup>1</sup>

This sacred ceremony was followed by the pledging by the initiate of an oath of secrecy, a breach of which could be atoned for only by death.

Then succeeded a series of ceremonies in which, by means of masks, the candidate was made to assume the character of various animals, such as the dog, the deer, the mare, the cock, etc.<sup>2</sup>

This, according to Oliver, concluded the first part of the ceremony of initiation. The second part began with striking the candidate a violent blow on the head with an oar, and a pitchy darkness immediately ensued, which was soon changed into a blaze of light which illuminated the whole area of the shrine.

This sudden change from darkness to light was intended to show forth the same transition which Noah experienced on coming out from the gloom of the Ark to the brightness of the renewed world.<sup>3</sup>

Thus it is claimed that the Druids were Arkite worshippers — a concession by Oliver to the theories of Faber and Bryant.

The light was then withdrawn and the candidate was again overcome by darkness and disorder. The most dismal howls, shrieks, and wails salute his astonished ear. Thus the symbolic death of Noah, presented as a type also of his confinement in the Ark, was shown with every outward sign of sorrow. Alarmed at

<sup>1</sup> "History of Initiation," p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> "History of Initiation," p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> "History of Initiation," p. 208.



the discordant noises, the candidate naturally sought to escape but this was rendered impossible. Wherever he turned he was opposed by dogs who threatened him. At length the great goddess Ceridwen seized him and bore him away by main force to the mythical sea representing the flood of waters over which Noah floated.

Here he is supposed to have remained for a year in the character of Arawn, or Noah.<sup>1</sup> The same terrifying sounds continued until at length, having come from the stream, the darkness ceased and the candidate found himself surrounded by the most brilliant flashes of light. This change produced in the attendants corresponding emotions which were expressed by shouts and loud songs of praise that testified to their rejoicings at the restoring to life of their god.<sup>2</sup>

The aspirant was then presented to the Archdruid who explained to him the design of the mysteries, gave him some portion of the secret knowledge of Druidism, and also advised the practice of fortitude which was valued as one of the leading traits of perfection.

With the performance of these painful ceremonies, the first degree of initiation into the Druidical Mysteries was finished.

In the second degree, where the trials, from Oliver's description, appear to have been of a less severe character, the candidate underwent lustration, a typical ablution or cleansing, which was followed by his reception of the light of wisdom. He was instructed in the morality of the order; taught that souls are immortal and must live in a future state; solemnly pledged to observe the performance of divine worship and the practice of virtue; and was invested with some of the badges of Druidism. Among these was the crystal, the true mark of his initiation. This crystal, or talisman against danger, was made only by the Druids, and its color varied in the three degrees. In the first it was green, in the second blue, and in the third white. The one presented to the aspirant was a combination of these colors.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This wait of a year in the waters of the deluge was like the days between loss and discovery in the Master Mason's degree, a period that really passes in the space of a few minutes — only a symbolic idea.

<sup>2</sup> "History of Initiation," p. 211.

<sup>3</sup> "History of Initiation," p. 212.



Beyond the second degree very few persons advanced. The third was conferred only on persons of rank and high standing, and in it the aspirant passed through still more toilsome ceremonies of training and instruction.

The candidate was placed in solitary confinement for a period of nine months, which time was devoted to reflection and to the study of the sciences, so that he might be prepared more fully to understand the sacred truths in which he was about to be instructed. He was again submitted to a symbolic death and rebirth by ceremonies different from those of the first degree. He was then supposed to represent a new-born infant, and, being placed in a coracle or boat, was given to the mercy of the waters. The candidate, says Oliver, was actually set adrift in the open sea, and he was obliged to depend on his own personal powers and presence of mind to reach the opposite shore in safety.<sup>1</sup>

This was done at night and this journey in the darkness which sometimes cost the candidate his life was the closing act of his initiation. Should he refuse to undertake it, he was rejected with contempt and pronounced unworthy of a part in the honors to which he aspired and for which he was forever afterward declared unfit. But if he bravely entered on the voyage and landed safely, he was received in triumph by the Archdruid and his companions. He was recognized as a Druid, and became eligible for any religious, civil, or military dignity. "The whole circle of human science was open to his investigation; the knowledge of divine things was communicated without reserve; he was now enabled to perform the mysterious rites of worship, and had his understanding enriched with an elaborate system of morality."<sup>2</sup>

Little is known of the religion of the Druids, on which these ceremonies are supposed to be founded, and concerning that little the opinions of the learned greatly differ. "Among those institutions," says Toland, "which are thought to be irrecoverably lost, one is that of the Druids, of which the learned have hitherto known nothing but by some fragments concerning them out of the Greek and Roman authors."<sup>3</sup> Thus the comments and criticisms

<sup>1</sup>"History of Initiation," p. 216.

<sup>2</sup>"History of Initiation," p. 217.

<sup>3</sup>"History of the Druids," in miscellaneous works, vol. i, p. 6.



relating to their true worship have been almost as various as the writers who have discussed them.

Cæsar, who got his knowledge of the Druids, imperfect as it was, from the priests of that period of Gaul, says that they worshipped as their chief god Mercury whom they considered as the inventor of all the arts, and after him Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva.<sup>1</sup> But the Romans had a habit of applying to all the gods or idols of foreign nations the names and qualities of the deities of their own myths. His statement scarcely amounts to saying more than that the Druids worshipped a variety of gods.

Davies, who notwithstanding his national prejudices and prepossessions is from his learning an authority not to be despised, concurs in the view of Cæsar so far as to say that "It is a historical fact, that the mythology and the rites of the Druids were the same, in substance, with those of the Greeks and Romans and of other nations which came under their observation."<sup>2</sup>

Dionysius the Geographer, another writer of the Augustan age, says that the rites of Bacchus were celebrated in Britain.<sup>3</sup> Strabo, on the authority of Artemidorus who wrote a century before Christ, asserts that in an island close to Britain (probably the Isle of Mona where the Druids had their principal seat) Ceres and Proserpine were adored with rites similar to those of Samothracia.<sup>4</sup>

Bryant, who traced all the ancient religions principally on the basis of a study of language to traditions of the deluge and the honoring of the patriarch Noah, took for granted of course that Druidism was but a part of this universal system of worship.<sup>5</sup>

Faber followed in the footsteps of his learned leader and adopted the same theory. He held the doctrine that the Druids were devoted to what he named "Arkite worship," or the worship of Noah, and that all their religious rites referred to the deluge, death and immortality being shown by the confinement

<sup>1</sup> "De Bello Gallico."

<sup>2</sup> "Mythology and Rites of the British Druids," p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> "Perieget," v, p. 565.

<sup>4</sup> Letter IV.

<sup>5</sup> "Analysis of Ancient Mythology." Drummond says of him: "Mr. Bryant was a man possessed of much learning and talent, but his etymologies are generally untenable." — "Origines," vol. iii, p. 191.



of the patriarch in the ark and his leaving it to enter a new and refreshed world being the symbol of the future life.<sup>1</sup>

It will be evident from the description already given of the Druidical initiations as explained by Dr. Oliver, that he agreed to a great extent in the views of Bryant and Faber.

Stukely, one of the most learned of English students of the ancient world, believed that the Druids were devoted to tree and serpent worship.\* He submits as evidence of the truth of this theory the great stone monuments of Stonehenge and Avebury, in the arrangement of whose stones he thought that he had traced a serpentine form.

On the contrary, Fergusson<sup>2</sup> scoffs in language not always temperate at the views of Stukely, and not only denies the serpentine form of the stone remains in England, as described by that authority, but objects to the claim that the Druids ever erected or had anything to do with stone temples or monuments in any part of the world. But as Fergusson presents no positive arguments in support of his claims, and as he even casts some doubt upon the existence of Druids at all in Britain, his position is by no means satisfactory. He has sought to destroy a palace, but he has not attempted to build even a hut in its place. Denying all other theories, he has offered none of his own.

If the Druids did not erect the stone monuments of Britain, who did? Until the contrary is proved beyond question, we have but little hesitation in crediting them to the Druids. But we need not enter into this discussion which belongs more properly and peculiarly to the province of archæology, the science of ancient things, than of Freemasonry.

Some writers have held that the Druids were Sun-worshippers, and that to adore the great solar source of light was the national religion of the ancient Britons. Hence these theorists are inclined to believe that Stonehenge and Avebury were really observatories, where the worshippers of the Sun might behold his rising, his daily course, and his setting.

At Stonehenge there are thirty roughly cut stone pillars, each from four to eight feet wide, two to four feet thick, and sixteen feet above the ground, and about three or four feet apart, form-

<sup>1</sup> "Pagan Idolatry."

<sup>2</sup> "Old Stone Monuments."



ing a circle one hundred feet in diameter. A large flat stone within the circle is supposed to have been an altar. At Avebury, also in England, there are two adjoining stone circles, one three hundred and twenty-five and the other three hundred and fifty feet in diameter, and both enclosed by a circular wall of earth twelve hundred feet in diameter.

Edward Davies, in his *Celtic Researches on the Origin, Traditions, and Language of the Ancient Britons*, and in his *Mythology and Rites of the British Druids*, maintains that there was among them a mutilated or fragmentary tradition of the Noachic deluge,<sup>1</sup> as there was among all heathen nations. The legend was similar to that of the flood of Deucalion, that character in the mythology of the Greeks bearing in his career so close a resemblance to Noah, and was derived from Samothrace and the East, having been brought by a colony from one nation to another and preserved without interruption.<sup>2</sup>

*Hu*, the supreme god of the Druids, he therefore supposes to have been the same as Noah, and he credits him with the various qualities that were divided among the many gods of the larger mythology of the Greeks and Romans, all of which, with Bryant and Faber, he considers refer to Sun-worship and to the Flood.

He therefore asserts that the Helio-Arkite god of the Britons, the great *Hu*, was a Pantheon (a group of gods in himself), who under his several titles and attributes included the whole series of gods whom the Greeks and other refined nations separated and arranged as individuals.<sup>3</sup>

In advancing his theory that the Druids were of Eastern origin, and that they had brought from that source their religion and their rites, Davies has been sustained by the opinions of some more recent scholars, though they have traced the birth-place to a more distant region than the Island of Samothracia off the coast of Greece.

Many have believed that the Druids were Buddhists, and that they came into Britain with the great tide of emigration from Asia which brought the Aryan race westward into Europe.

<sup>1</sup> "Mythology and Rites of the British Druids," p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> "British Druids," p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> "British Druids," p. 126.



The religion of India must in that case have become debased in the course of its travels. It is admitted that the Druids cultivated the art of magic and in their rites were accustomed to sacrifice human victims, both of which practices were opposed to the philosophic spirit of Buddhism.

The fact is that notwithstanding the authority of the Welsh Bards and the scanty passages in Cæsar, Tacitus, and a few other Roman writers, we are entirely at sea in reference to everything connected with the religious system of Druidism. Almost all the data on this subject are guesswork and mystery — fanciful theories the only foundation of which is in the imaginations of their framers, and bold assertions for the truth of which no competent authority can be given.

Much of the confusion of ideas in respect to the customs and manners of the ancient Britons has arisen from the ignorance of the old writers in supposing that the inhabitants of Britain, at the time of the Roman invasion and long before, were of the one people. The truth is that the island was inhabited by two very distinct races. Those on the coast, coming from the opposite shores of Gaul, Germany, and Scandinavia, were a people who had made some progress in civilization. The interior of the island was populated by the original natives who were uncivilized and even barbarous, and it was among the latter that the Druidical religion prevailed and its mystical and inhuman rites were practiced.

James Fergusson, in his extended work on *Tree and Serpent Worship*, supports this view. He says:

“From whatever point of view the subject is looked at, it seems almost impossible to avoid the conclusion that there were two races in England — an older and less civilized people, who in the time of the Romans had already been driven by the Celts into the fastnesses of the Welsh hills, and who may have been serpent-worshippers and sacrificers of human victims, and that the ecumenical Romans confounded the two.”<sup>1</sup>

He is, however, in error in supposing that the Romans were ignorant of this fact, for Cæsar distinctly says in his *Gallic War* that “the interior part of Britain was inhabited by those who were natives of the island.” Thus he clearly distinguishes the

<sup>1</sup> “Tree and Serpent Worship,” p. 29.



inhabitants of the interior from those who dwelt on the coast and who, to use his expression, "had passed over from Belgium."

He speaks of them in another place as a rude and barbarous race who in one of their embassies to him describe themselves as a savage and unpolished people wholly unacquainted with Roman customs.

Speaking of the ancient Gauls, M. Thierry, in his history of that people, makes the following remarks, every one of which may be fairly said of the ancient Britons. He says:

"When we attentively examine the character of the facts concerning the religious belief of the Gauls, we are enabled to recognize two systems of ideas, two bodies of symbols and superstitions altogether distinct — in a word, two religions. One of these is altogether sensible, derived from the adoration of the phenomena of nature; and by its forms and by its literal development it reminds us of the polytheism of the Greeks. The other is founded upon a material pantheism, mysterious, metaphysical, and sacerdotal, and presents the most astonishing conformity with the religions of the East. This last has received the name of Druidism, from the Druids who were its founders and priests."<sup>1</sup>

To the former religion M. Thierry gives the name of Gaulish polytheism. A similar distinction must have existed in Britain, though our own writers do not seem generally to have carefully observed it. In no other way can we attempt, with any prospect of success, to explain the differing traditions in relation to the religion of the ancient Britons. The Roman writers have credited a polytheistic form of religion to the people of the coast, derived apparently from Greece, the gods having only assumed different names. But this religion was very far removed in its character from the bloody and mysterious rites of the Druids, who seem to have brought the forms and objects but not the spirit of their worship from the far East.<sup>2</sup>

The Masonic writers who have sought to trace some connection between Druidism and Freemasonry have unfortunately yielded too much of their judgment to their imagination. Having adopted

<sup>1</sup> "Histoire des Gaulois," tome ii, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> The resemblance of Druidism to the religion of the Phœnicians, the people of Hiram, King of Tyre, and of Hiram Abif, is remarked by writers. It suggests a source that in view of the visits of the Phœnicians to Britain is not improbable.



a theory, they have, in their investigations, substituted speculation for proof and guesses for facts. By an elastic process of reasoning, they have fitted all sorts of legends and traditions to whatever was required for their preconceived system.

Preston said in his *Illustrations of Masonry* that "the Druids retained among them many usages similar to those of the Masons," and thus he assumed that there might be an affinity between the rites of the two institutions, leaving his readers, however, to determine the question for themselves.

Godfrey Higgins — of all writers not claiming to write fiction, the most imaginative and the most given to guesswork — goes a step farther and asserts that he has "no doubt that the Masons were Druids," and that they may be "traced downward to Scotland and York." Of this he says "the presumption is very strong."<sup>1</sup>

Hutchinson thinks it probable that some of the rites and institutions of the Druids are retained in forming the ceremonies of the Masonic society.<sup>2</sup>

The theory of Dr. Oliver connected Druidism and Freemasonry. The Doctor held that there were two currents of Freemasonry that came side by side down the stream of time. These were the Pure Freemasonry of the Patriarchs that passed through the Jewish people to King Solomon and thence onward to the present day, and a schism from this pure foundation, worked out by the Pagan nations and developed in the ancient Mysteries, which impure system he called the Spurious Freemasonry of antiquity. He supposes Druidism to have come from this latter system.

In support of this opinion, he collects in several of his works, especially in his *History of Initiation*, the rites and ceremonies of the Druids with those of the Eleusinian, Dionysian, and other Mysteries of the Pagan nations, and attempts to show that the design of the initiation was the same in all of them and the forms very similar.

True to his theory that the Spurious Freemasonry was an impure secession or offshoot from the Pure or Patriarchal system, he denies that modern Freemasonry has taken anything from

<sup>1</sup> "Anacalypsis," vol. i, p. 769.

<sup>2</sup> "Spirit of Masonry," lecture iii, p. 41.



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Druidism, but admits that there is a likeness in the design and form of initiation in both which would naturally arise from the origin of each in an older system.

We have therefore to consider two theories in reference to the relations of Druidism and Freemasonry.

The first is that Freemasonry has taken its system from that of the British Druids. The second is that, while any such descent or succession of the one system from the other is not claimed, yet that there is a very great similarity in the character of both which points to some common origin.

Mackey advanced a third theory which he held to be far more easily harmonized than either of the others with the true facts of history. Brother Mackey's views will be examined later on in this essay.

We may dismiss the second of these theories with the remark that it depends for support on the truth of the claim that there was a historical connection between the Mysteries of the Pagans and Freemasonry. But it seems clear that any similarity of form or design in these institutions is due not to any dependence or succession, but simply to the influence of that law of human action which makes men always pursue the same ends by like methods.

Dr. Oliver goes so far in the attempt to sustain his theory of two systems of Freemasonry existing at the same time as to assert that at the time of the Roman invasion, and after the establishment of Christianity in the island, the True and the Spurious Freemasonry — that is, the pure system as now practiced and the impure one of Druidism — “flourished at the same period and were considered as distinct institutions in Britain.”<sup>1</sup>

There is no historical testimony to prove the claim of Dr. Oliver. Even if we were to accept the doctrine of Anderson that all great architects in past times were Freemasons, we could not dignify the rude carpenters of the early Britons and Anglo-Saxons with that title.

The other theory which traces Freemasonry, or at least its rites and ceremonies, to Druidism will require a more extended review.

<sup>1</sup> “On Freemasonry, Evidences, Doctrines, and Traditions,” No. 1, in *Freemasons' Quarterly Review*, 1840, p. 15.



We must first investigate the methods by which it is supposed that the Greeks and Pythagoras in particular forwarded a knowledge of their mysteries to the Druids in their far-off and retired homes in uncivilized Britain.

Probably the principal seats of the British Druids were in Cornwall and in the islands near to its coast, in Wales, and in the Island of Mona; that is to say, on the southwestern shores of Britain.

The Druids in these localities were within reach of any of the navigators from Europe or Asia who should have gone to that country for the purpose of trade. Just such a class of traders was found in the Phœnicians, a daring people noted for their spirit of enterprise across the seas.

The testimony of the Greek and Roman writers is that by distant voyages in search of traffic the Phœnicians had reached the southwestern shores of Britain, and that they loaded their vessels with tin which was found in great quantities in Cornwall and the Scilly Islands on its coast.

Those who suppose that the religious rites practiced by the Phœnicians at home were brought by them into Britain are required in proof of their theory to show that the Phœnicians were missionaries as well as merchants; that they remained long enough in Britain at each voyage to plant their own religious rites in the island; that these merchant-sailors, whose main object was evidently the collection of a profitable cargo, would give any portion of the time required for this object to teaching the barbarians, whom they met in the way of business, of the dogmas of their own mystical religion; that even if the Phœnicians were so disposed, the Britons were inclined during these necessarily brief visits to exchange their ancient religion, whatever it was, for the worship thus introduced by the newcomers; and, finally, that the fierce and bloody superstition of the Druids with its human sacrifices bore any resemblance to or could have been obtained from the purer and more kindly religion of the Phœnicians.

History tells us only that the Phœnician merchants visited Britain for the purpose of obtaining tin. On this fact some Masonic theorists have erected a fanciful edifice of missionary enterprises successfully ending in the planting of a new religion.



Experience shows us how little in this way was ever accomplished or even attempted by the modern navigators who visited the islands of the Pacific and other unknown countries for the purposes of discovery. Nor can we be ignorant of how slow is the progress in changing the religion of any people by the efforts of professed and devoted missionaries who have lived and labored for years among the people they sought to convert. They have made converts, it is true, but only in exceptional cases do they succeed in rooting out the old faith of a nation or a tribe and establishing their own in its place. It is not to be presumed that the ancient Phœnician merchants could, with less means and less desire, have been more successful than our modern missionaries.

For these reasons the proposition that Druidism was brought from Greece and Asia into Britain by the Phœnicians is one that is not to be accepted on any principle of historical evidence or probability.

We have been told that Pythagoras visited Britain and instructed the inhabitants in the doctrine of metempsychosis, the passing after death of a soul from the one body to another.

There is, however, no historical evidence that the sage of Samos ever went in his travels as far as Britain. Neither is it certain that the dogma of soul migration as taught by him is of the same character as that which was believed by the Druids. Besides, it is contrary to all that we know of the course pursued by Pythagoras in his visits to foreign countries. He went to learn the customs of the people and to get a knowledge of whatever science they might possess. We do not know that he ever visited Britain but if he had done so his purpose would have been to get rather than to give instruction.

There is a further explanation offered by these theorists, of a connection between Druidism and Freemasonry, that the former acquired a knowledge of the Eleusinian and other rites because of their relations with the Greeks, during the celebrated invasion of the Celts, which extended to Delphos, and during the intercourse of the Gauls with the Grecian colony of Marseilles. But in answer to these claims it is sufficient to say that neither of these events occurred until after the system of Druidism must have been well established among the people of Britain and of Gaul.



The principal argument against any connection of Druidism and Freemasonry is the difference of the two systems and their opposition to each other. The bloody superstition of the Druids was developed in their sacrifice of human victims as a mode of satisfying their offended gods. Their doctrine of a future life was entirely different from the pure belief in immortality which is taught by Freemasonry and developed in its symbols.

Dr. Mackey's opinion, advanced in the place of the two other theories already discussed, traces Druidism neither to the Phœnicians, nor to Pythagoras, nor to the Greeks. He held that the ancient inhabitants of Britain were a part of the Celtic division of a wandering people in southern Russia, the Cimmeii, who, springing from their Aryan origin in the Caucasian Mountains, first settled for a time in the region of Asia which lies around the Euxine or Black Sea, and then passed over into the north and west of Europe. One detachment of them entered Gaul and another crossing the North Sea made their home in Britain.

Probably these wanderers carried with them some memories of the religious faith they had learned from the original stock whence they sprung. A leading fact in the study of humanity is the tendency of gypsy races springing from those that are tillers of the soil to decline in civilization.

The claim is also made that the Druids were Buddhists. This might be so, for Brahmanism and its offspring, Buddhism, were the religions of the early Aryan stock whence came the Druids. But it is very evident that in the course of their travels the faith of their fathers must have become impure. Between Buddhism and Druidism the only connecting link is the dogma of the transfer of souls. The rites of the two sects are unlike.

We may suppose, therefore, that the system of Druidism was the pure invention of the Britons, just as the Mysteries of Osiris were the work of some Egyptian priest or body of priests. What assistance the Britons had in the making of their mystical system must have been derived from faint recollections of the dogmas of their fatherland, which from the very dimness of those memories must have been misunderstood. That there is proof or much probability is doubtful that they obtained any suggestions in the construction or the improvement of their system of religious rites from the Phœnicians, from the Greeks, or from Pythagoras.



If, for the sake of argument, we accept for a time the theory that Freemasonry and the Mysteries came from a common source and that thereby there is a connection between the two, we can not fail to see on an examination of the doctrines and ceremonies of the Druids that they bear no relation to those of the Mysteries of Egypt or of Greece. Thus the link is missing which would connect Druidism with Freemasonry through the initiations of the East.

There is not in Druidism a close resemblance to Freemasonry. Of course there is the unimportant circumstance that both have mystical ceremonies. There were the voyages of the candidate in Druidism, after a period of long solitude and confinement, his pursuit by the angry goddess Ceridwen and her dogs, his dangerous passage in a coracle or small wicker or basket boat over the rough waters, and his final landing and reception by the Archdruid. These may have referred, as Dr. Oliver thought, to the migration of the soul through different bodies. But just as probably they symbolized the troubles and sufferings of human life in the progress toward perfection of mind and morals. They bear not the slightest analogy to the mystical death in Freemasonry which is the symbol of a resurrection to a future and immortal life.

Therefore the bold assertion of Paine, in his *Essay on the Origin of Freemasonry*, that "it is derived from and is the remains of the religion of the ancient Druids," simply shows in the opinion of Dr. Mackey that he was a mere pretender in the subject he sought to treat. Equally unsound is the proposition of the more learned Faber, when he says that "the Druids are probably the real founders of English Freemasonry."

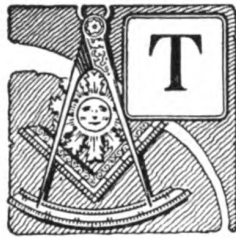
Brother Mackey therefore arrived at this conclusion that from what we learn of the two institutions from historical knowledge of the one and our personal experience of the other, Freemasonry has no more relation or reference or similitude to Druidism than the pure system of Christianity has to the barbarous Fetichism of the tribes of Africa.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Presidential Address delivered by J. Walter Fewkes before the Anthropological Society of Washington, Feb. 20, 1912, "Great Stone Monuments in History and Geography", is published in the Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, vol. 61, No. 6, 1913. Containing 36 illustrations and many references to various valuable sources of information, it is also clear, scientific, and sane in deductions. The author shows that there is a unity in mental action among very different races of mankind, and that this similarity is an important factor in human history. Such monuments as those associated with the Druids should be considered in the light of Fewkes' reasoning.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

### FREEMASONRY AND THE CRUSADES



THE legendary history of Freemasonry contains nothing more interesting or more crowded with the romance of heroes and adventure than the stories telling of its origin and growth with the Crusades. Nothing has been written about early Freemasonry in which the judgment and reasoning powers have more completely given place to the imagination of inventors of various theories on this subject.

We shall examine in due course the support given by several writers to the theory tracing the origin of Freemasonry to the Crusades, to the chivalric or knightly orders of the Middle Ages, and especially to the Knights Templar.<sup>1</sup> First, however, it will be proper to take a very brief view of the wars between the Christians and the Saracens which, under the name of the Crusades, cost Europe so vast an amount of blood and treasure in the unsuccessful attempt to get and to hold possession of the Holy Land or Palestine. This review or synopsis need not be more than a brief one, because the topic has been frequently and freely treated by many historians, from Joinville to Michaux and Mills, and must therefore be familiar to most readers.

About twenty years after the Moslems had conquered Jerusalem, a monk of Picardy in France had paid a pious visit to the Holy City. Angered at the indignities to which the Christian pilgrims were subjected in their faithful and devoted journeys to the tomb of their Lord, and moved by the complaints of the aged monk, Peter the Hermit — for such is the name that he bears in history — resolved on his return to Europe to attempt to rouse

<sup>1</sup> There is excellent authority for the use of this spelling of the words. We also call attention to the statement of Sir Charles A. Cameron, "On the Origin and Progress of Chivalric Freemasonry in the British Isles," p. 3, "I use the form Knights Templar simply because it was adopted by the Grand Priory: Knight Templars, and Knights Templars appear to be forms of older authority."



the religious sentiment and the military spirit of the sovereigns, the nobles, and the people of the West. Having first obtained the approval of the Pope of Rome, Peter the Hermit travelled through Italy and France, and by fiery addresses in every place that he visited urged his hearers to the sacred duty of rescuing Palestine from the hands of the infidels. The superstitious feelings of a priest-governed people and the military spirit of knights accustomed to adventure were readily awakened by the eloquence of a fanatical preacher. In every city and village, in the churches and on the highways, the voice of Peter the Hermit proclaimed the wrongs and the sufferings of pious pilgrims. His reproaches awoke the sorrow and repentance of his hearers for their past indifference to the cause of their brethren, and stimulated their eagerness to rescue the sacred shrines from the dishonoring grasp of their Saracen possessors.

A spirit of enthusiasm spread through all classes of the people — nobles and priests, princes and peasants. There came about a wonderful uprising, one which the history of the world had never before and has never since presented. With united action war was declared by the nations of western Europe against the profaning Moslems. Tradesmen and mechanics left the pursuits by which they were accustomed to gain their livelihood; peasants and farmers quit their fields, their flocks, and their herds; and the nobles and barons sold or mortgaged their estates to find the means of joining the expedition and to take up arms in a holy cause.

Numerous conflicts followed for the space of two hundred years. These wars were called the Crusades, or, in French, *Croisades*, from the blood-red cross worn by the warriors on the breast or shoulder. The red cross was first bestowed at the Council of Clermont by Pope Urban on the Bishop of Puy, and ever afterward worn by every Crusader as a badge of his profession.

The first body of troops of the great army destined for a holy war started in the year 1096 from the western countries. There were nearly three hundred thousand men, for the most part of the lowest sections of society, and these were headed by Peter the Hermit. As a fighting force it was, however, a huge, untrained and unruly mob rather than an army. Their leader was entirely with-



out military ability and power to govern it or to control its wild confusion.

The march, or rather the progress, of this immense throng toward Asia Minor was marked at every step by crime. They destroyed the towns and plundered the inhabitants of every province through which they wandered wild, unorganized, a lawbreaking rabble. The outraged inhabitants opposed their passage with arms. In many conflicts in Hungary and in Bulgaria they were slaughtered by thousands. Peter the Hermit escaped to the mountains. Of his deceived and debased followers but few reached Constantinople, and still fewer the shores of Asia Minor. They were quickly destroyed by the forces of the Sultan. The first war of the Crusades had not fairly begun before three hundred thousand lives were lost in the advance guard of the army.

The first Crusade was undertaken in the same year, and speedily followed the advanced body whose unlucky fate has just been recorded. This military force included many of the most noted barons and knights, who were accompanied by their feudal retainers.<sup>1</sup>

At the head of this more disciplined army, consisting of a hundred thousand knights and horsemen and five times that number of foot-soldiers, was the renowned Godfrey of Bouillon, a nobleman famed for his religious faith and devotion, his valor, and his military skill.

This mighty army, although awkward to handle because of its vast numbers and scarcely manageable by reason of the different elements of the various nations of which it was composed, was, notwithstanding many reverses, more fortunate and more successful than the rabble under Peter the Hermit that had preceded it. Godfrey and his army reached Palestine in fairly good condition for fighting, though not without a large loss of knights and soldiers. At length the Holy City, after a siege of five weeks, was conquered by the Christian warriors in the year 1099 and their leader was declared the first Christian King of Jerusalem. He wanted not the honor of the royal title. Godfrey refused to accept

<sup>1</sup> Feud, from the Latin language, is the name given in law to a piece of land that is held of a superior on condition of rendering him service. As F. H. Hedge says in his "Essays, Feudal Society, 'The holder of a feud was bound to follow his lord to battle, albeit against his own kindred, when required, and against his sovereign.'" This feudal system was in force through Europe for many centuries.



a crown of gems in the place where his Lord and Master had worn a crown of thorns, and contented himself with the rank of Duke, and Defender of the Holy Sepulcher.

During the course of the next twenty-five years Palestine became the home, or at least the dwelling-place, of much of the chivalry of Europe. The Latin kingdom of Jerusalem had extended eastward from the shores of the Mediterranean Sea to the deserts of Arabia, and southward from the city of Beritus (now Beirut), in Syria, to the frontiers of Egypt, besides the country of Tripoli, which stretched north of Beritus to the borders of the principality of Antioch.

A second Crusade, begun by the preaching of the monk St. Bernard, and promoted by Louis VII. of France, was undertaken in the year 1147. The number of knights, soldiers, priests, women, and camp-followers who were engaged in this second Crusade has been estimated as nearly a million. At its head were the Emperor Conrad III. of Germany and King Louis VII. of France. This effort to relieve and to strengthen the declining Christian power in Palestine was not a successful one. After a futile and inglorious attempt to take the city of Damascus, whose nearness to Jerusalem was considered dangerous to the Latin kingdom, Louis returned home with the small remnant of his army, in 1149, and was followed in the next year by the Emperor Conrad. Thus ended uselessly the second Crusade, and the position against the infidels in Palestine was left to be defended by the feeble forces but un-failing courage of the Christian inhabitants.

For the next thirty-five or forty years there is a sad and continuous record of the reverses of the Christians. They had to contend with a new and powerful adversary in the person of the renowned Saracen, Sal-lah-ud-deen, better known as Saladin, who after sixteen years of warfare with the Christian knights, in which he was sometimes defeated but oftener a victor, succeeded in taking Jerusalem on the 2d of October in the year 1187.

Thus, after a possession by the Christians of eighty-eight years, the city of Jerusalem and the holy shrine which it contained fell again into the power of the Moslems.

When the tidings of its fall reached Europe, the greatest dismay and sorrow prevailed. At once there came about a general determination to make a vigorous effort for its rescue from the



infidel conquerors. The enthusiasm of the people for its recovery was scarcely less than that which had preceded the first and second Crusades under the eloquent appeals of Peter the Hermit and St. Bernard. The principal sovereigns of Europe, Spain alone excepted, which was engaged in its own struggles to destroy the Moors, resolved to lead the armies of their respective nations to the reconquest of Jerusalem. Thus there began the third Crusade.

Countless forces from England, France, Italy, and other countries, in the year 1188, rushed with hasty rashness to Palestine. One hundred thousand Crusaders, under Guy de Lusignan, appeared the following year, 1189, before the city of Acre. The siege lasted for two years, with a vast waste of lives on both sides. At length the city gave up the struggle and the Mussulmans surrendered to the victorious forces of Richard the Lionhearted, King of England.

This third Crusade is remarkable for the number of European sovereigns who were personally engaged in it. Richard of England, Philip Augustus of France, Frederick Barbarossa of Germany, and the Dukes of Suabia and of Burgundy, had all left their dominions to be governed by regents in their absence and had joined in the pious struggle to redeem the Holy Land from Mohammedan rule.

Notwithstanding many victories over Saladin in hard-fought fields, and the conquest of many important places, such as Acre, Ascalon, Jaffa, and Cæsarea, the Crusaders failed in their great design of recovering Jerusalem. The Holy City still remained in the possession of Saladin, who, however, having made a truce with King Richard, granted, as one of the terms of the treaty, free and undisturbed access to all pilgrims who desired to visit the place so dear to Christian and Jew.

Thus ended the third Crusade. Scarcely can it be called an absolute failure, notwithstanding that Jerusalem still remained in the hands of the infidels. But the total ruin with which at its commencement the Latin kingdom had been threatened was avoided; the conquering progress of the Mussulmans had been seriously checked; the hitherto victorious Saladin had been compelled to make a truce; the greater part of the seacoast of Palestine, with all its fortresses and the cities of Acre, Jaffa, Antioch, and Tyre, remained in the possession of the Christians.



Saladin survived the making of the truce with Richard but a few months. On his death the dominions were divided between three of his sons and his brother Saphadin. The last of these, to whom most of the veterans who had fought under Saladin remained attached, secured for himself a sovereignty in Syria.

The death of their famous and powerful foe had encouraged the Christians of Palestine to make renewed efforts to recover Jerusalem as soon as the truce had expired. To aid in this design, a new Crusade was begun in Europe. The appeal, heard with unconcern in England and France, met with more favor in Germany. Three large forces of German chivalry arrived at Acre in 1195. The campaign lasted, however, less than two years, and the troops, having effected no decisive results, were recalled to Germany in consequence of the death of the Emperor Henry VI. This expedition, which has been dignified by some writers with the name of the fourth Crusade, has, however, more generally been considered as a mere incident in the history of the holy wars.

The fourth Crusade proper began in the year 1203, when a large army of knights and men-at-arms of France, Germany, Italy, and Flanders sailed for Constantinople in transports furnished by the Venetians and commanded by the blind Doge or Chief Magistrate of Venice, Dandolo. The throne of the Byzantine Empire had been unlawfully seized by the elder Alexius, who imprisoned his brother, the legitimate ruler, after causing the latter's eyes to be put out. The first object of the Crusaders was to dethrone the usurper and to restore the government to Isaac and his son, the younger Alexius, who had started the enterprise and who accompanied the expedition.

The siege and the conquest of Constantinople is told in the graphic language of Gibbon; but it is so wholly unconnected with the subject of our present inquiry as not to claim further attention. It is sufficient to say that by it the Crusaders were entirely cut off from the great object for which they left Europe. None of them ever reached or sought to reach the land of Palestine. Thus the fourth Crusade ended without a blow having been struck for the recovery of Jerusalem and the deliverance of the Holy Sepulcher from the unholy grasp of its Paynim possessors.

The fifth Crusade commenced in the year 1217. In this war the Crusaders attacked Egypt, believing that that country was the



key to Palestine. At first they were successful. They besieged and captured the city of Damietta. But, influenced and directed by the love of money and the ignorance of the representative of the Pope, they refused the offer of the Saracens, that if the Christians would leave Egypt they would give up Jerusalem to them, and continued the campaign with most disastrous results. Finally, abandoning the contest, the Crusaders returned to Europe in 1229, never having even seen the shores of the Holy Land.

A sixth Crusade was undertaken by the French in 1238. Later on, they were joined by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, the nephew of Richard the Lionhearted. The military capacity and powers of this able leader led to successful results, and, in 1240, to the restoration of Jerusalem to the Christians. The Crusade ended with the return in 1240 of the Earl of Cornwall to England.

The fortifications of Jerusalem were rebuilt by the Knights Templar. Scarcely had the necessary measures for defense been completed when the Christian kingdom was attacked by a new enemy. The descendants of those barbaric tribes of Tartars who, under the name of Huns, had centuries before overcome the Roman Empire, now began to lay waste Asia Minor. Twenty thousand Turcoman horsemen under Barbacan, their chief, assisted by Egyptian priests, were enabled in 1242 to take Jerusalem from the Christians who never again recovered it until the surrender to the British on December 9, 1917.

The war begun in 1242 continued with a series of disasters to the Christians. Palestine was overrun by the barbarous hosts of Turcomans. The Moslems of Damascus, Aleppo, and Ems, forgetful of their ancient hatred and religious conflicts, united with the Knights Templar to oppose a common enemy.

The effort to stay the progress of the Turcoman invasion was vain. Nearly every city of the Latin kingdom, such as Tiberias, Ascalon, Jaffa, and others, was conquered. Acre alone remained to the Christian chivalry. The Holy Sepulcher was again in the possession of the infidels.

A seventh Crusade was commenced in 1245 to recover what had been lost. It was undertaken by the chivalry of England and France. Louis IX. commanded the French portion of the forces in person. William Longsword, who had distinguished himself



in the fifth Crusade, with many other English knights and nobles, vowed that they would serve under the banner of France.

Egypt was again made the first object of the expedition. After an unnecessary and unwise delay of eight months at Cyprus, Louis sailed in 1248 for Egypt with a force of fifty thousand men. The history of this Crusade is but an account of repeated defeats of the Christians by the arms of their enemies, by famine, and by disease. At Mansora, in 1250, the Crusaders were totally routed; thirty thousand Christians were slain, among them the finest of the French and English chivalry. King Louis himself was taken prisoner. He was only ransomed by the surrender of Damietta to the Turks. The conquest of that city had been almost the only successful trophy of the Christian arms. The King went to Acre, one of the remaining possessions of the Christians in Syria, and soon afterward returned to France, thus ending the seventh and the last but one of the Crusades, in the year 1254.

Then for fourteen years Syria and Palestine were left to the poor protection that could be afforded by the Knights Templar and the Hospitallers, two Orders who even in the face of their common foe could not check their own bitter discord and rivalry. These conflicts resulted in a bloody battle between them in which the Templars were almost completely destroyed.

The Latin kingdom of Palestine being thus weakened by the quarrels among its defenders, city after city was lost to the Moslems until Acre alone remained in the hands of the Christians. The heaviest blow was inflicted in the year 1268 by the fall of Antioch, capital of Syria. Forty thousand Christians were slain at the time of its surrender and one hundred thousand sold into slavery.

The fall of the Christian state of Antioch was a misfortune that once more aroused the military ardor and the pious spirit of Europe. A new Crusade was begun for the recovery of the Holy Land, the restoration of the Latin kingdom, and to expel the infidels from the sacred territory.

This Crusade was conducted entirely by Prince Edward, afterward Edward I. of England. True, Louis IX. of France, fearless of such disasters as had previously befallen him, had with unflinching ardor sought to renew his efforts for the recovery of the



Holy Sepulcher. He sailed from France for that purpose in 1270. But he had stopped short at Tunis where he had hoped to convert to Christianity the king and people. Although no decisive battles took place between the Moors and the Christians, the army of the latter was soon destroyed by the heat of the climate, by fatigue, by famine and disease. The King of France himself died but little more than a month after his arrival on the shore of ancient Carthage.

Prince Edward had joined the French army at Tunis with a small force of knights. After the death of the French King and the giving up of that enterprise, he sailed for Syria with an army of only one thousand knights and men-at-arms and landed at Acre in 1270. The knights of the chivalry of Palestine gathered gladly around his standard and quickly increased his army to seven thousand men. With this unequal supply of soldiery, weak in numbers but strong in courage and in the capacity of their leader, Edward attacked the great hosts of Moslems besieging Acre, caused them to retire, and following them to Nazareth, captured that city after a battle in which the infidels were defeated with great slaughter.

The taking of Nazareth closed the military career of Edward in Palestine. Narrowly escaping death from a poisoned wound inflicted by a Moslem assassin, he returned to England in 1271, having first arranged a truce of ten years with the Sultan of Egypt.

The defense of Palestine, or rather of Acre, the only point occupied by the Christians as the capital in name at least of the Latin kingdom, was left to the knights of the three Orders of Chivalry, the Templars, the Hospitallers, and the Teutonic Knights. By them the truce was many times broken. Peaceable Moslem traders were often plundered. Satisfaction for these acts having often been asked in vain, the Sultan at length determined to expel the "faithless Franks." He marched against Acre with an army of two hundred thousand men.

After a siege of little more than a month in which wonderful bravery was shown by the knights of the three military orders, Acre was taken in 1271 by assault at the cost of sixty thousand Christian lives. The inhabitants who did not submit to the Moslem yoke escaped to Cyprus with the remnant of the Templars,



the Hospitallers, and the Teutonic knights that outlived the slaughter.

Thus, after a bloody series of struggles for two hundred years, the possession of the Holy Land was left in the hands of enemies of the Cross.

So ends the history of the Crusades. For fifty years afterward the popes tried to renew the old efforts for the recovery of the holy places. Their appeals met with no success. The tide of religious zeal to set free the Holy Sepulcher that had inspired the kings, the nobles and the knights of Europe for two centuries had ebbed away. The thirst for glory and the love of arms were from that time on to be directed into other channels.

We need not inquire here into the influence exerted by the Crusades on the state of religion, of education, of commerce, or of society in Europe. The theme is an interesting one, but it is foreign to the subject of our discussion which is the possible connection that may have existed between them and the origin of Freemasonry. In so far as they may have favored the growth of civic freedom and tended to continue to some extent the system of chivalry, it will be necessary in a future part of this discussion that these points should get some attention.

For the present point of view, the most important object of our attention is the organization during the Crusades of three military Orders of Knighthood, the Knights Hospitaller, the Knights Templar, and the Teutonic Knights. Through these, but principally through the second, the attempt is made to find the origin of the Masonic institution in the time of the Crusaders.

The origin of the institution of chivalry may have been from the mounted horsemen of the Romans, the Scandinavians, the Arabians, the Persians, or, what is far more probable, from the peculiar influences of the feudal system. However, it is certain that that form of knighthood which found a place in the organization of religious and military orders took its rise in Palestine during the wars of the Crusades. Before that era no such organizations of knighthood were known in Europe.

The Knights Hospitaller of St. John, now better known as the Knights of Malta because of their later location in that island, was the first of the military and religious Orders established in Palestine. Its origin must be traced to the Hospitallers of Jeru-



saalem, a purely charitable body founded by certain merchants of Amalfi in the kingdom of Naples, who, trading in the East, built hospitals in Jerusalem for the entertainment and relief of poor and sick pilgrims, about the middle of the 11th century. After the first Crusade had begun, many knights, laying aside their arms, joined with the Hospitallers in the pious task of attending the sick. At length Gerard, the Rector of the Hospital, induced his brethren to take the vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity, and to adopt a peculiar costume consisting of a black robe bearing a white cross of eight points, the familiar Maltese Cross, four barbed arrowheads meeting at their points, on the left breast. This was in the year 1099. The knights, however, continued their peaceful work of attending the sick until 1118, when Gerard, having died, was succeeded by Raymond de Puy as Rector. The military spirit of Raymond did not favor the monkish retirement fostered by his predecessor. He therefore proposed a change in the plan and purpose of the society by which it should become a military Order devoted to the protection of Palestine from the attacks of the infidels. The members gladly agreed to this proposition and taking new vows at the hands of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, the military Order of Knights of St. John of Jerusalem was established in 1118. The Order remained in Palestine during its occupation by the Christians of the Latin kingdom, taking an active part in all the wars of the eight Crusades.

When the city of Acre fell before the victorious army of the Sultan of Egypt, the Hospitallers with the knights of the other two Orders, who had escaped the slaughter which attended the siege and followed on the surrender, fled to Cyprus. From there they went to Rhodes where they remained for two hundred years under the title of the Knights of Rhodes, and afterward permanently established themselves at Malta in 1530 where, with a change of name to that of the Knights of Malta, they remained until the island was taken possession of by Napoleon, in the year 1798. This was virtually the end of the career of these valiant knights, although the Order continued to retain some remnant of its existence in Italy.

The Order of Knights Templar was established in the year 1118 by Hugh de Payens, Godfrey de St. Aldemar, and seven other knights whose names history has not preserved. Uniting the



characters of the monk and the soldier, they took the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience in the presence of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Baldwin II., King of Jerusalem, gave them as a residence a part of his palace which stood near the site of the former Temple, and the abbot and officers of the church and convent of the Temple added another building for keeping their arms, from which circumstance they derived their name of Templars.

The Templars took a most active part in the defense of Palestine during the two centuries of the Crusades. They also established homes called Preceptories in every country of Europe where many of the knights resided. But the headquarters of the Order was in Palestine. At the close of the contests for the conquest of the Holy Land, when Acre fell and the Latin kingdom was dissolved, the Templars made their escape to Europe and were distributed among their various Preceptories.

Their wealth excited the envy and their power the rivalry of Philip the Fair, King of France, who with the help of a weak and wicked Pope, Clement V., resolved to crush the Order. Charges of unbelief and of wrongdoing, irreligion and immorality, were made against them. Proofs were not wanting when testimony was required by a King and a Pontiff. On the 11th of March, 1314, Jacques or James de Molay, the Grand Master, with the three principal officers of the Order, were publicly burnt at the stake, fifty-four knights having suffered the same fate three years before.

The Order was suppressed in every country of Europe. Its vast possessions were partly taken by the different sovereigns for their own use and partly given to the Knights of Malta, between whom and the Templars there had always been a rivalry, and who were not unwilling to share in the spoils of their old-time foes. In Portugal alone they were permitted to continue their existence, under the name of the Knights of Christ.

But it is well to remember that so careful a student as Brother W. J. Chetwode Crawley in *Ars Quatuor Coronati*, vol. XXVI, part 1, p. 52, rejects this latter claim. His reasons are in brief that what prevented the Order of St. John from being a home for the outcast Templars operated even more strictly with the new Order. When Dionysius, King of Portugal, lost the help of the Templars against the Moors, he created a new Order, whose suc-



cess depended upon its being distinct from the Order expelled. Beyond their common object, the two were totally different. The Order of the Temple had a white mantle, a Red Cross and the Standard was the black and silver banner. The Order of Christ had a black mantle, a white Cross and the standard was the Royal Banner of Portugal. The Portuguese Order was under Benedictine rule and the Templars under the Augustinian. This last precaution was enforced in 1320 by Pope John XXII. and probably to prevent the old Order entering the new. See also *An Accurate Historical Account of All the Orders of Knighthood, at Present Existing in Europe*, vol. II, p. 52.

The Teutonic Knights, the last of the three Orders, was a German organization. Their humble origin is thus told: During the Crusades, a wealthy gentleman from Germany resided at Jerusalem where he built a hospital for the relief and support of his countrymen who were pilgrims. This charity was extended by other Germans coming from Lübeck and Bremen. Finally, during the third Crusade, a fine hospital was erected at Acre, and an Order was formed under the name of the Teutonic Knights, or Brethren of the Hospital of our Lady, of the Germans of Jerusalem. The rule or regulations adopted by the knights closely resembled the Hospitallers' or Templars', with the exception that none but Germans could be admitted into the Order.

The Teutonic Knights, like the knights of the other two Orders, remained in Palestine until the fall of Acre, when they returned to Europe. For many years they were engaged in a crusade to convert the Pagans of Prussia and Poland, and then warred against the kings of Poland who invaded their lands. After centuries of contests with various powers, the Order was at length abolished by Emperor Napoleon in 1809, although it long continued, but in name only, in Austria.

As to any pretended connection of the Crusaders with Freemasonry, we may dismiss the two Orders of the Knights of Malta and the Teutonic Knights with the single remark that in their organization they bore not the slightest likeness to that of Freemasonry. They had no arcana or inner mystery in their system, no secret form of initiation or admission, and no especial methods of recognition. Besides this want of similarity which must at once forbid any idea of a link between Freemasonry and



these chivalric Orders, we fail to find in history any record of such a connection or the faintest reference to it.

Let us suppose that Freemasonry owed its origin to the Crusades, as has been asserted by some writers, or that any influence was exerted upon it by the Knights who returned to Europe after or during these wars and found the Craft already existing as an organization. Then we must look for such connection or such influence to the Templars only.

The probabilities of such a connection have been based upon the following historic grounds: The Knights Templar were a secret society, differing in this respect from the other two Orders. They had a secret doctrine and a secret ceremony of initiation into their ranks. This secret character of their ceremonies was made the subject of one of the charges preferred against them by the Pope. The words of this charge are that "when they held their chapters, they shut all the doors of the house or church in which they met so closely that no one could approach near enough to see or hear what they were doing or saying." It is further said, in the next charge, that when they held their secret chapter "they placed a watchman on the roof of the house or church in which they met, to foresee the approach of any one."

Perhaps the Templars had held frequent and intimate relations with some of the secret societies which during the Crusades existed in the East. From them they may have got certain doctrines which they made a part of their own Order and introduced into Europe on their return, making these the basis of a system resulting at least in the invention of the advanced degrees if not in the creation of the entire Masonic institution.

It may not be possible to sustain this theory of the relations of the Templars and the secret societies of the East by any authentic historical proof. But it derives some feature of possibility, and perhaps even of probability, from the admitted character of the Knights Templar during the last days of their residence in Palestine. They have not been supposed to strictly obey their vows of chastity and poverty. They had lost that humility which made them at first call themselves "poor fellow-soldiers of Christ" and adopt as a seal two knights riding on one horse. So much is evident from the well-known anecdote of Richard I. of England. Being advised by a zealous preacher to get rid of his three favorite



daughters, pride, envy, and lust, he replied: "You counsel well. I hereby dispose of the first to the Templars, the second to the Benedictines, and the third to my bishops."

The Templars were accused by their fellowmen of loose morals and of infidelity in religion. The Bois du Guilbert drawn by the graphic pen of Brother Walter Scott in *Ivanhoe*, although fiction, had many a counterpart in history. There was, in short, nothing in the severity of manners or strictness of faith which would have prevented the Templars of the Crusades from holding frequent meetings with the infidel secret societies around them. The Druses, indeed, are said by some modern writers to have Templar blood in them, from the unlawful relations of their female ancestors with the Knights.

Three of these secret societies at least demand a brief attention, from the supposed connection of the Templars with them. These are the Essenes, the Druses, and the Assassins.

The Essenes were a Jewish sect living mainly on the shores of the Dead Sea. Of the three schools of religion favored by the Jews in the time of our Saviour, the Pharisees and the Sadducees only were censured for their vices and their deceit, while neither He nor any of the writers of the New Testament have referred in words of censure or of criticism to the Essenes. This complete silence concerning them has been understood to be in their favor, as showing that they had not by their doctrines or their conduct incurred or deserved the displeasure of our Lord or of His disciples.

Some have even supposed that St. John the Baptist, as well as some of the Evangelists and Apostles, were members of the sect — an opinion that is at least not absurd. The conclusion of De Quincey, that they were Christians, is supported only by similarities of conduct, the Essenes having many things in common.

Their ceremonies and their beliefs are hidden in mystery, notwithstanding the labors of the learned Ginsburg. From him and from Josephus, who is the first of the ancient writers who has mentioned them, as well as from Philo and some other authorities, we get the following facts:

The forms and ceremonies of the Essenes were, like those of the Freemasons, most symbolical. They were all opposed to marriage, and hence it became necessary to recruit their ranks,



which death and other causes cut down from time to time, by the admission of new converts. Therefore they adopted a system of initiation divided into three degrees. The first stage was begun by a preparation extending over some three years. At the end of the first degree, the trials of which continued for twelve months, the candidate was presented with a spade, an apron, and a white robe, the last being a symbol of purity. In the second degree or stage he was called an *approacher*. This period of his progress lasted for two years, during which time he was permitted to join in some of the ceremonies of the sect, but not allowed to be present at them all. He was then accepted as an *associate*. If his conduct was approved, he was finally advanced to the third degree and received into full membership as a *companion* or *disciple*.

Brewster, in the work credited to Lawrie, seeks to find a common origin for the Freemasons and the Essenes, and supports his opinion by the following facts, which, if they do not sustain the truth of his claims, are certainly confirmed by other authorities. He says: "When a candidate was proposed for admission, the strictest scrutiny was made into his character. If his life had hitherto been exemplary, and if he appeared capable of curbing his passions and regulating his conduct according to the virtuous though austere maxims of the Order, he was presented at the expiration of his novitiate with a white garment as an emblem of the regularity of his conduct and the purity of his heart. A solemn oath was then administered to him, that he would never divulge the mysteries of the Order, that he would make no innovations on the doctrines of the society, and that he would continue in that honorable course of piety and virtue which he had begun to pursue. Like Freemasons, they instructed the young members in the knowledge which they derived from their ancestors. They admitted no women into their Order. They had particular signs for recognizing each other, which have a strong resemblance to those of Freemasons. They had colleges or places of retirement, where they resorted to practice their rites and settle the affairs of the society; and after the performance of these duties they assembled in a large hall, where an entertainment was provided for them by the president or master of the college, who allotted a certain quantity of provisions to every



individual. They abolished all distinctions of rank, and if preference was ever given, it was given to piety, liberality, and virtue. Treasurers were appointed in every town to supply the wants of indigent strangers."<sup>1</sup>

Josephus gives the Essenian oath more fully. He tells us that before being admitted to the common meal, that is, before receiving full membership, the candidate takes an oath "that he will exercise piety toward God and observe justice toward men; that he will injure no one either of his own accord or by the command of others; that he will hate the wicked and aid the good; that he will be faithful to all men, especially to those in authority; that if ever placed in authority he will not abuse his power nor seek to surpass those under him in the costliness of his garments or decorations; that he will be a lover of truth and a reprover of falsehood; that he will keep his hands clear from theft and his soul from unlawful gains; that he will conceal nothing from the members of his own sect, nor reveal their doctrines to others, even at the hazard of his life; nor will he communicate those doctrines to any one otherwise than as he has himself received them; and, finally, that he will preserve inviolate the books of the sect and the names of the angels."

This last expression is supposed to refer to the secrets connected with the Tetragrammaton or Four-lettered Name and the other names of God and of the ruling angels comprised in the curious knowledge taught by the Cabbalists and also, it is said, by the Essenes.<sup>2</sup> The mystery of the name of God was then, as it is now, a feature in all Oriental philosophy and religion.

In the opinion of Brunet the Essenes were less a sect of religion than a religious order or association of zealous and pious men whom the desire of attaining a state of perfection had bound together.<sup>3</sup> But whether they were one or the other, any theory which seeks to connect them with Freemasonry through the Knights Templar has but slight foundation, if any.

At the time of the Crusades, and indeed long before, the Essenes had ceased to hold a place in history. What little

<sup>1</sup> Lawrie, "History of Freemasonry," edition 1804, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> The Cabbala or Kabbala was a Jewish system of philosophy, theosophy and magic. Much importance was given to numbers. The fact that every letter in Hebrew stands also for a number enabled the Cabbalists to read into the Scriptures many peculiar meanings.

<sup>3</sup> Brunet, "Parallèle des Religions," P. VI, sec. xlv.



remained of them was to be found in settlements about the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea. They were few in numbers, and had lost the old strictness of rule in their doctrines and their manners, adopting the custom of marriage, and accepting much of the philosophy of Plato, of Pythagoras, and of the school of Alexandria.

They still kept, however, their Jewish faith and much of their original severity of rules. Therefore it is unlikely that there could have been any real intimacy and relationship between them and the Templars. Their poverty and lack of importance would have no attraction to the Knights, and their severity of manners and Judaism would have repelled them.

Let us admit the similarity of Essenism and Freemasonry in the establishment by each of a brotherhood distinguished by love, charity, and a secret initiation. We can draw no conclusion from these coincidences that there was a connection of the two associations, since the same similarities will be found in all fraternities ancient and modern. They arise from no spirit of imitation or fact of descent, but are the natural outgrowth of the social condition of man which is ever developing itself in such mystical and fraternal associations.

We shall elsewhere treat of the theory which traces Freemasonry from Essenism by a direct descent, without the use of a Christian chivalric link in the chain. We cannot, in considering the Secret Societies of the East at the time of the Crusades, avoid the anticipation of that argument to some extent.

The Druses were followers of another mystical religion with which the Templars are said to have come in contact and from whom they are claimed to have borrowed certain dogmas and customs which were taken to Europe and put into the system of Freemasonry.

The Templars may have had relations of some sort with the Druses. Of that is some evidence, both traditional and historic. But what influence that communication had upon either Templarism or Freemasonry is a problem that admits only of a doubtful solution. The one proposed by King, in his work on the Gnostics, will be referred to in the proper place.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See "The Gnostics and Their Remains, Ancient and Modern," by G. W. King. London, 1887.



The Druses are a mystical sect who have always inhabited the southern side of Mount Lebanon and the western side of Anti-Lebanon, extending from Beirut in the north to Sur in the south, and from the shores of the Mediterranean to the city of Damascus. They trace their origin to Hakim, who was Sultan of Egypt in 996, but derive their name from Mohammed Ben Israel Darasi, under whose leadership they fled from Egypt in the year 1016 and settled in Syria, in that part around Lebanon where they are still to be found.

Their religion appears to be a mixture of Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism. Exactly what their religion is it is impossible to tell. They keep their dogmas a secret to be imparted only to those of their tribe who have passed through a form of initiation.

Churchill says of this initiation that there is a preparation period of twelve months before the candidate can be admitted to full membership. In the second year, the apprenticeship and training having been completed, the Druse is permitted to wear the white turban as a badge of his profession, and is allowed to take a part in all the mysteries of his religion.<sup>1</sup>

These mysteries refer altogether to dogma, for their religion is without ceremonies of any kind, and even without prayer.

Their doctrines have been explained as follows: There is one God, unknown and unknowable, without personal form and of whom we can only predicate an existence. Nine times he has appeared on earth in the form of man. These were not incarnations, for God did not assume flesh, but merely put on flesh as a man puts on a garment. There are five invisible intelligences, called Ministers of Religion, and who have been impersonated by five Druse teachers, of whom the first is *Universal Intelligence*, personated by Hamsa, whose creation was the immediate work of God. The second is the *Universal Soul*, personated by Ismael, and is the female principle in like manner as the *Universal Intelligence* is the male. From these two proceed the *Word*, which is personated by Mohammed Wahab. The fourth is the *Right Wing*, or the *Proceeding*, produced from the *Word* and the *Universal Soul* and personated by Selama. The fifth is the *Left*

<sup>1</sup>See "The Druses and Maronites under the Turkish Rule," by Charles Henry Churchill. London, 1862.



*Wing*, or the *Following*, produced in the same way from the *Proceeding* and personated by Mochtana Behædeen. These form the religious hierarchy of Drusism as the ten Sephiroth make the mystical tree of the Cabbalists from whom it is probable that the Druses borrowed the idea. But they are taken, as Dr. Jessup says, "in some mysterious and incomprehensible sense which no Druse, man or woman, ever understood or can understand."<sup>1</sup> Yet their sacred books assert that none can possess the knowledge of Drusism except he knows all about these Ministers of Religion.

They have also seven precepts or commandments, obedience to which is ordered, but they are seldom heeded by modern Druses, and never in their dealings with unbelievers, those outside their ranks. These official rules of conduct are:

1. To speak the truth.
2. To render each other mutual assistance.
3. To renounce all error.
4. To separate from the ignorant and wicked.
5. To always assert the eternal unity of God.
6. To be submissive under trials and sufferings.
7. To be content in any condition, whether of joy or sorrow.

We have no reliable information of their outward forms and ceremonies because their worship is a secret one. In their sacred buildings, sheltered among high trees or placed on the mountain top, there are no ornaments. They have no formal rites and do not offer prayer, but in their worship sing hymns and read the sacred books. Churchill gives evidence of the deep secrecy in which the Druses hide their religion. "Two objects," he says, "engrossed my attention — the religion of the Druses and the past history of the races which now occupy the mountain range of Lebanon. In vain I tried to make the terms of extreme friendship and intimacy which existed between myself and the Druses available for the purpose of informing myself on the first of these points. Sheiks, akkals, and peasants alike, baffled my inquiries, either by jocose evasion or by direct negation."<sup>2</sup>

Finally, as if to complete their resemblance to a secret society, we are told that to enable one Druse to recognize another

<sup>1</sup> "Syrian Home-Life," p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> "The Druses and Maronites under Turkish Rule."



a system of signs and passwords is adopted, without an exchange of which no particulars in respect to their mysteries are given.

The Rev. Mr. King, in his work on the Gnostics, thinks that "the Druses of Mount Lebanon, though claiming for their founder the Egyptian Caliph Hakim, are in all probability the remains of the numerous Gnostic sects noticed by Procopius as flourishing there most extensively in his own times,"<sup>1</sup> which was in the 6th century. And he adds that "the popular belief among their neighbors is that they, the Druses, adore an idol in the form of a calf, and hold in their secret meetings orgies similar to those laid to the charge of the Ophites in Roman times, of the Templars in mediæval, and of the continental Freemasons in modern times."<sup>2</sup> This statement has been supported by other writers.

Mr. King thinks it an interesting and important point that "the Druses hold the residence of their Supreme Head to be in Scotland"; a tradition which, he says, has been "evidently handed down from the times when the Templars were all-powerful in their neighborhood." This would prove, admitting the statement to be true, rather that the Druses borrowed from the Templars than that the Templars borrowed from the Druses. Even then it will be difficult to explain why the Templars should have traced their head to Scotland, since the legend of Scottish Templarism is of more recent growth.

We may, however, judge of the weight to be attached to Mr. King's arguments from the fact that he deems it to be a "singular coincidence" that our Freemasons are often spoken of by German writers as the "Scottish Brethren." Not being a Freemason, he knew not the meaning of the term which refers to a particular rite of Freemasonry, and not to any theory of its origin, and is therefore no coincidence at all. The theory that connects the sect of Gnostics with Freemasonry will in its turn be considered.

The Rev. Haskett Smith has argued that "The Druses are none other than the original subjects of Hiram, King of Tyre, and that their ancestors were the builders of Solomon's Temple. That to this very day the Druses retain many evident tokens of their close and intimate connection with the ancient craft of Freemasonry. Moreover, Laurance Oliphant, writing some years

<sup>1</sup> King's "Gnostics," p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> "Gnostics," p. 183.



ago respecting the Druces of Mount Lebanon, pointed out the very close similarity that exists between their ritual for admission of youths into their secret conclave and the initiation ceremony of a modern apprentice to Speculative Masonry."<sup>1</sup>

Another secret society, of greater importance than the Druses, flourished with vigor in Syria at the time of the Crusaders. The relations of this society with the Templars, as historically proved, may have had some influence over that Order in suggesting or in shaping some of its esoteric dogmas and ceremonies. This was the sect named the Assassins.

The Ishmaeleeh or Ismailites, or as they are more commonly called, the Assassins, from their supposed use of the herb *hashish* to produce a temporary madness, was during the Crusades one of the most powerful tribes of Syria, although their population is now but small. The sect was founded about the end of the 11th century, in Persia, by Hassan Sabbah. From Persia, where they are said to have received many of the doctrines of the philosophical sect of the Sofis, they moved to Asia Minor and settled in Syria, to the south of Mount Lebanon. Their chief was called Sheikh-el-Jeber, literally translated "the Old Man of the Mountain," a name familiar to the readers of the Voyages of Sinbad. Higgins, who, when he had a theory to uphold, became erratic upon the subject of language, translates it in his *Anacalypsis* as "the sage of the Kabbala or Traditions," but the plain Arabic words admit of no such meaning.

The too ready belief and dark ignorance of the Middle Ages gave to the sect of the Assassins the character of being murderers by habit, a historical error that has been kept alive in our language by the meaning given to the word "assassin." This untruth has been exploded by the researches of modern scholars who now class them as a philosophical sect whose doctrines and instructions were secret. Of the Sofis, from whom the Ishmaeleeh or Assassins derived their doctrine, it will be necessary soon to speak.

Von Hammer-Purgstall, who wrote a history of the Assassins,<sup>2</sup> sought to trace a close connection between them and the Tem-

<sup>1</sup> "Transactions of Quatuor Coronati Lodge," vol. iv, p. 8, 1891.

<sup>2</sup> "Die Geschichte der Assassinen aus Morgenländischen Quellen," by Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall. Tübingen, 1818. Translated from the German by O. C. Wood, London, 1835, with title of "History of the Assassins: Derived from Oriental Sources."



plars. He has shown himself rather as having a bias than as being a fair critic, but the sophistry of his conclusions does not affect the accuracy of his historical statements. Subsequent writers have therefore, in their accounts of this sect, borrowed largely from the pages of Von Hammer-Purgstall.

The Assassins were a secret society having a religion and religious instructions which they imparted only to those of their tribe who had gone through a set form of initiation. According to Von Hammer-Purgstall, that system of initiation was divided into three degrees. They provided oaths of secrecy and of faithful obedience and had modes of mutual recognition, thus resembling in many respects other secret societies which have at all times existed. He says that they were governed by a Grand Master and had regulations and a religious code of laws, in all of which he supposes that he has found a close resemblance to the Templars. Their religious views he states to have been as follows:

"Externally they practice the duties of Islamism, although they internally renounce them; they believe in the divinity of Ali, in uncreated light as the principle of all created things, and in the Sheikh Ras-ed-dia, the Grand Prior of the Order in Syria and contemporary with the Grand Master Hassam II., as the last representative of the Deity on earth."<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Mr. Lyde, who traveled among the remains of the sect in 1852, says that they professed to believe in all the prophets, but had a chief respect for Mohammed and his son-in-law Ali, and he speaks of their secret prayers and rites as being too disgusting to be mentioned.<sup>2</sup>

The Templars entered at various times during the Crusades into friendly arrangements and treaty agreements with the Assassins, in whose territory several of the fortresses of the Knights were built. We may therefore readily believe that at those periods, when war was not raging, there might have been a mutual exchange of courtesies, of visits and of conferences.

The Assassins were by no means unfitted to give some elements of knowledge to their knightly neighbors. The chivalry

<sup>1</sup>"Geschichte der Assassinen," Wood's translation, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup>"The Ansyreeh and Ishmaeleeh: a Visit to the Secret Societies of Northern Syria," by Rev. Samuel Lyde, B.A., London, 1853, p. 238.



of that age was not noted for learning and knew little more than the use of weapons, while the Syrian infidels had brought from Persia a large share of the mental training of the Sofis. Von Hammer-Purgstall, whose testimony is given in the face of his personal dislike, admits that they produced many treatises on mathematics and law, and he confesses that Hassan, the founder of the sect, possessed a deep knowledge of philosophy, and of the pure sciences. We can not therefore deny the probability that in the frequent meetings with this studious as well as war-like tribe the Templars may have got some of those doctrines and secret usages peculiar to the Order on its return from Palestine, and which, mistaken and misused by their enemies, formed the basis of those charges which led to the attack upon, and finally to the crushing of, Knight Templarism.

Godfrey Higgins, whose curious speculations are weakly controlled, finds a close connection between the Freemasons and the Assassins, through the Templars. "It is very certain," he says, "that the Ishmalians or Society of Assassins is a Mohammedan sect; that it was at once both a military and religious association, like the Templars and Teutonic Knights; and that, like the Jesuits, it had its members scattered over extensive countries. It was a link that connected ancient and modern Freemasonry."<sup>1</sup> Later on he claims that "the Templars were nothing but one branch of Freemasons."<sup>2</sup> And so he goes on speculating, that Templarism and Ishmaelism were the same, and that Freemasonry sprung from them both, or rather from the latter through the former. But as Higgins has advanced several other theories of the origin of Freemasonry, we may let the present one pass.

We may be prepared, however, to admit that the Templars possibly to some extent changed their secret doctrines under the influence of their friendly conferences with the Assassins. We can do this without recognizing the further claim that the Templars exercised a similar influence over the Freemasons.

We have said that the Assassins are supposed to have derived their doctrines from the sect of the Sofis in Persia. Indeed, the Sofis appear to have been the common origin of all the secret

<sup>1</sup> "Anacalypsis," I, p. 700.

<sup>2</sup> "Anacalypsis," I, 712.



societies of Syria, which will account for their general likeness to each other. In any inquiry, therefore, into the probable or possible connection of Templarism with these societies, Sofism, or the doctrine of the Sofis, will form an interesting field for study.

The sect of the Sofis started in Persia, and extended over other countries of the East. The name is generally supposed to be derived from the Greek *Sophia*, wisdom, and they bore also the name of *philosauph*, which will easily suggest the word *philosopher*. Dr. Herbelot, however, traces the name from the Persian *sauf* or *sof*, wool, because, as he said, the ancient Sofis dressed in woolen garments. The former derivation is, however, the most likely.

Sir John Malcolm, who has given a very good account of them in his *History of Persia*, says that among them may be counted some of the wisest men of Persia and the East. The Mohammedan Sofis, he says, have tried to connect their mystic faith with the doctrine of the prophet in a manner that will be better shown from a reading of Von Hammer-Purgstall. That the Gnostic heresy was spread through the system of Sofism is very evident, and at the same time there appears to have been some connection in ideas with the school of Pythagoras. The object of all search is to find truth, and the labors of the initiate are in a symbolic way directed to its discovery.

Sofism has a system of initiation divided into four degrees. In the first or preparatory degree, the novice is required to observe the rites of the popular religion in its ordinary meaning. In the second degree, called the *Pale of Sofism*, he exchanges these exoteric or outer rites for a spiritual and secret faith. The third degree is called *Wisdom*, and in this the initiate is supposed to be given more than human knowledge and to become equal with the angels. The fourth and last degree is called *Truth*, which the candidate is now supposed to have reached, and to have become united with God.

Sir William Jones has summed up their doctrines, so far as they have been made known, in his collected works, as follows:

Nothing exists absolutely but God; the human soul is but an outflow from His essence, and, though for a time separated from its divine source, will in the end be united with it. From this union the highest happiness will result, and therefore that the



chief good of man in this world consists in as perfect a union with the Eternal Spirit as the burden of the flesh will permit.

Von Hammer-Purgstall's history of the rise, the progress, and the nature of Sofism is more minute, more accurate, and therefore more worthwhile than that of many other writers. In accepting it for the reader, we shall not hesitate to use concisely the language of Sloane, the author of the *New Curiosities of Literature*.

The German historian of the Assassins says that a certain *House of Wisdom* was formed in Cairo at the end of the 10th century by the Sultan, which had thus arisen. Under Maimun, the seventh Abasside Caliph, a certain Abdallah established a secret society, and divided his doctrines into seven degrees, after the system of Pythagoras and the Ionian schools. The last degree taught the vanity of all religion and the indifference of actions, which are visited by neither future profit nor penalty. He sent missionaries abroad to enlist disciples and to initiate them in the different degrees, according to their ability.

Karmath, one of his followers, improved this system in a short time. He taught that the Koran was to be used as allegories. By adopting a system of symbolism, he made arbitrary explanations of all the precepts of that book. Prayer, for instance, meant only obedience to a mysterious Imam, whom the Ishmaeleeh said that they were engaged in seeking, and the order for almsgiving was explained as the duty of paying him tithes or taxes. Fasting was only silence in respect to the secrets of the sect.

The more violent followers of Karmath sought to take the throne and control the religion of Persia. With this intent they made war upon the Caliphs, but were defeated and destroyed.

The wiser portion, under the general name of Ishmaelites, continued to work in secret, and finally succeeded in placing one of their sect upon the throne. In course of time they erected a large building, which they called the House of Wisdom, and furnished it with professors, attendants, and books, and mathematical instruments. Men and women were admitted to the enjoyment of these treasures, and scientific and philosophical discussions took place. It was a public institution, but the secret Order of the Sofis, under whose control it was kept up, had their



mysteries which could only be obtained by an initiation extending through nine degrees. While Sofism has by most writers been believed to be a religio-philosophical sect, Von Hammer-Purgstall thinks that it was political, and that its principal object was to overthrow the House of Abbas in favor of the Fatimites, which could only be done by overthrowing the national religion.

The government at length interfered, and the work of the society was stopped. In about a year it renewed labors and started a new House of Wisdom. Extending its influence abroad, many of the disciples of Sofism passed over into Syria about the close of the 10th century, and there established those secret societies which in the course of the Crusades came into contact, sometimes on the field of battle and sometimes in friendly conferences during temporary truces, with the Crusaders, but especially with the Knights Templar. The principal of these societies were the Ishmaeleeh or Assassins and the Druses, both of whom have been described.

There were other societies in Syria, resembling these in doctrine and ceremonies. For some especial reasons not now known these had left the main body which appears to have been the Assassins.

Such were the Ansyreeh, who were the followers of that Karmath we have mentioned, who had seceded at an early period on the coast, in the plain of Laodicea, now Ladikeeh.

From them arose another sect, called the Nusairye, from the name of their founder, Nusair. They settled to the north of Mount Lebanon, along the low range of mountains extending from Antioch to Tripoli and from the Mediterranean to Hums, where their descendants still remain.

From their frequent meetings with these various secret societies, but especially with the Assassins, that Von Hammer-Purgstall and Higgins, following claims credited to Ramsay,<sup>1</sup> have supposed that the Templars derived their secret doctrines and, carrying them to Europe, gave them to the Freemasons. A fair statement would be that Von Hammer-Purgstall and Higgins believed these Syrian societies to be Masonic, and that

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Michael Ramsay, born at Ayr, Scotland, about 1686 and died in 1743. Noted for an address delivered in 1737 before a general meeting of Freemasons at Paris which is often used to trace Freemasonry to the Crusaders.

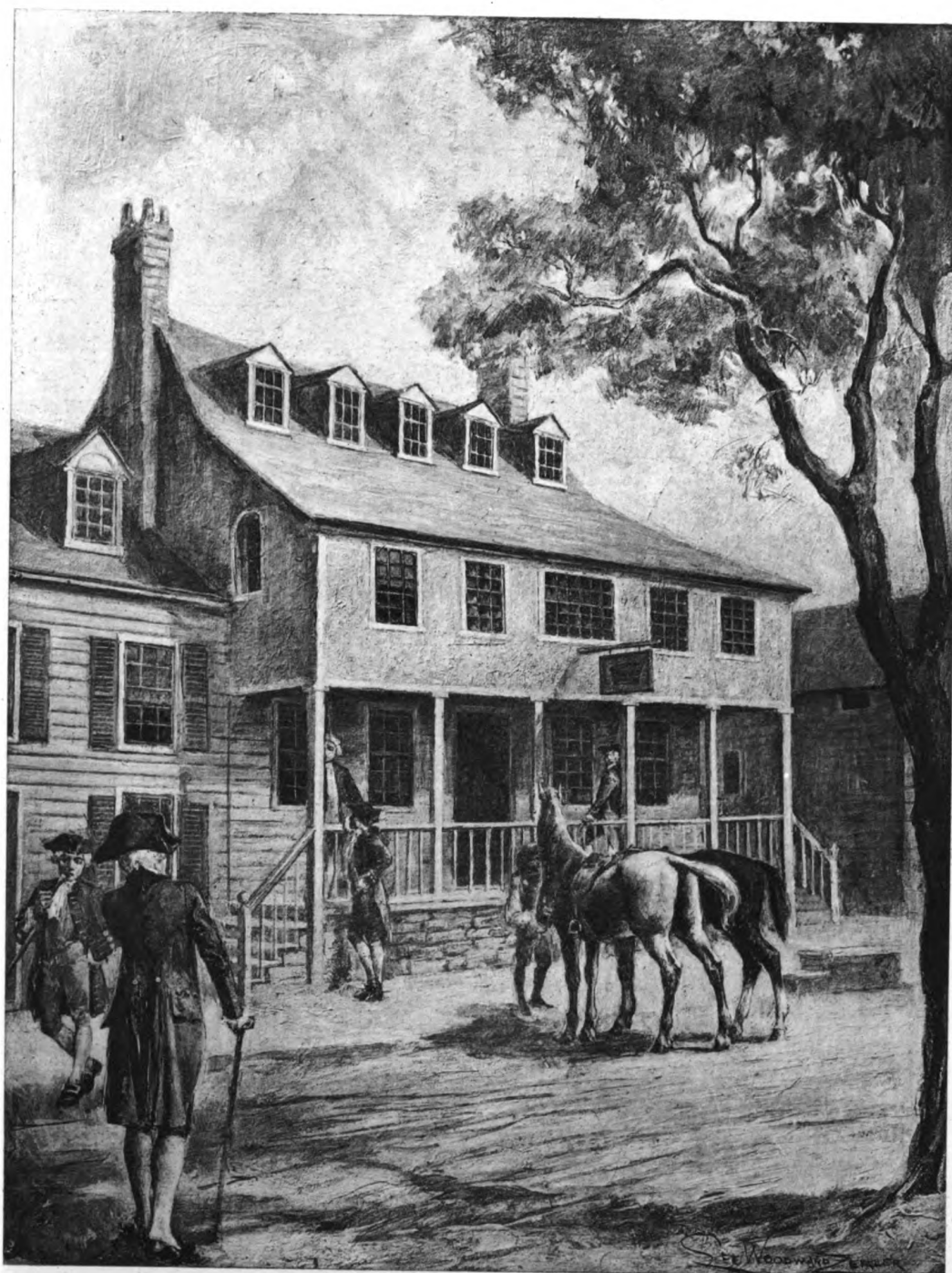


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they taught the principles of the institution to the Templars who were thus the founders of Freemasonry in Europe.

There is not the slightest historical evidence for such a theory. When we come to examine the authentic history of the origin of Freemasonry, it will be seen how such a claim is entirely without support.

That the Templars did have frequent meetings with those secret societies, that they received a knowledge of their doctrines, and that these did have a considerable influence upon the lives of many of their members, and perhaps in making some secret changes of their Order, is a claim that can not be denied or doubted. There are abundant evidences in history of such meetings and exchanges, and we must admit that it is a probable theory that the Knights were to some extent impressed with the doctrines of Sofism practiced by these sects.

We may admit, then, that the Templars got some philosophical ideas more liberal than their own from these Syrian secret philosophers who were more learned than they themselves. The next question will be as to what influence the Templars exerted upon the people of Europe on their return, and in what direction and to what ends this influence was exerted.

Before entering upon this subject, we may as well notice one important fact. Of the three Orders of Knighthood, who showed their powers in Palestine and Syria during the two centuries of the Crusades—the Hospitallers, the Teutonic Knights, and the Templars—it is admitted that the Templars were more closely acquainted with the Ishmaeleeh or Assassins than either of the others. Moreover, while the admission to membership in the Hospitaller and Teutonic Orders was open and public, the Templars alone had a secret initiation. They held their meetings in houses guarded from the eyes of strangers. At what time the Templars adopted this secret form of initiation is not known. The rule provided for their government by St. Bernard at the period of their organization makes no mention of it. Probably there was no such secret initiation practiced for many years after their Order was founded.

This question naturally suggests itself: Did the Templars borrow the idea and in part the form of their initiation from the Assassins, among whom such a system existed? Or if they got



these from some other source, were they subjected at a later period of their career, but long before they left Palestine, to changes derived from their intercourse with the secret societies of Syria? These are questions not to be historically solved. We must rest for any answer on mere guesses. Yet the facts of the Templars being of the three Orders the only secret one, and of their intercourse with the Assassins who were also a secret order, are worthy of note. Some light may be thrown upon this subject by a study of the charges, mainly false but with certain elements of truth, urged against the Order when it was destroyed.

Let us now consider the theory that makes the Templars the founders of the Order of Freemasonry, after the return of the Knights to Europe. Rejecting this theory as wholly without serious standing in fact, it will, however, be necessary to inquire what were the real influences exerted upon Europe by the Knights.

True, we must remember that if any influence at all was exercised upon the people of Europe, the greater part must be credited to the Templars. Of the three Orders, the Hospitallers when they left Palestine went directly to the island of Rhodes, where they remained for two hundred years. Then, removing to Malta, they continued in that island until the decline of their Order in the closing years of the 18th century. The Teutonic Knights betook themselves to the uncivilized parts of Germany, and renewed their war work by crusades against the heathens of that country. The Templars alone distributed themselves in the different kingdoms and cities of the continent, and became familiar with the people who lived around their Preceptories. They alone came in contact with the inhabitants, and they alone could have exercised any influence upon the popular mind or taste.

A generally received opinion of the most able architects has been that the Templars exerted a healthy influence upon the architecture of the Middle Ages. Thus Sir Christopher Wren says that "the Holy Wars gave the Christians who had been there an idea of the Saracens' works, which were afterward imitated by them in their churches, and they refined upon it every day as they proceeded in building."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wren's "Parentalia."



But the most positive opinion of the influence of the Crusaders upon the architecture of Europe was given in 1836 by Westmacott, a noted artist of England. In the course of a series of lectures before the Royal Academy, he thus spoke of the causes of the revival of the arts:

There were, he said, two principal causes which tended materially to assist the restoration of literature and the arts in England and in other countries of Europe. These were the Crusades and the extension or the establishment of the Freemason's institution in the north and west of Europe. The adventurers who returned from the Holy Land brought back some ideas of various improvements, particularly in architecture, and along with these a strong desire to erect castellated, ecclesiastical, and palatial edifices, to display the taste that they had acquired; and in less than a century from the first Crusade above six hundred buildings of the above description had been erected in southern and western Europe. This taste, he held, was spread into almost all countries by the establishment of the Fraternity of Freemasons, who, it appears, had, under some peculiar form of Brotherhood, existed for an immemorial period in Syria and other parts of the East, whence some bands of them migrated to Europe, and after a time a great efflux of these men, Italian, German, French, Spanish, etc., had spread themselves in communities through all civilized Europe; and in all countries where they settled we find the same style of architecture from that period, but differing in some points of treatment as suited the climate.

The latter part of this statement requires proof. We doubt that there is any historical evidence of the coming into Europe of men of the Syrian secret fraternities during or after the Crusades, nor is there any likelihood that such visits could have occurred.

But the historical testimonies are very strong that the literature and arts of Europe, and especially its architecture, were much advanced by the influence of the returning Crusaders. Their own knowledge had been enlarged and their taste improved by their contact with the nations of the East.

Such a topic belongs, however, to the historical rather than to the legendary aspects of Freemasonry, and in the course of this work receives our attention. At present we must limit



ourselves to the consideration of the theory that traditionally connects the Crusaders, and especially the Knights Templar, with the founding of the Masonic institution, through their meetings with the secret societies of Syria.

The inventor of the theory that Freemasonry was instituted in the Holy Land by the Crusaders, and by them on their return introduced into Europe, was the Chevalier Michael Ramsay, to whom Freemasonry usually credits (whatever may be the value of the debt) the system of high degrees and the making of Rites.

Ramsay was the Grand Orator, and delivered a discourse before the Grand Lodge of France, in the year 1737, in which he thus traces the origin of Freemasonry. Throwing aside as fables all theories which trace the foundation of the Order to the Patriarchs, to Enoch, Noah, or Solomon, he finds its origin in the time of the Crusades.

"In the time," he says, "of the Holy Wars in Palestine, many princes, nobles, and citizens associated themselves together and entered into vows to re-establish Christian temples in the Holy Land, and engaged themselves by an oath to employ their talents and their fortunes in restoring architecture to its primitive condition. They adopted signs and symbolic words, derived from religion, by which they might distinguish themselves from the infidels and recognize each other in the midst of the Saracens. They communicated these words only to those who had previously sworn a solemn oath, often taken at the altar, that they would not reveal them. Some time after, this Order was united with that of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, for which reason in all countries our Lodges are called Lodges of St. John. This union of the two Orders was made in imitation of the conduct of the Israelites at the building of the second Temple, when they held the trowel in one hand and the sword in the other.

"Our Order must not, therefore, be regarded as a renewal of the Bacchanalian orgies and as a source of senseless dissipation, of unbridled libertinism and of scandalous intemperance, but as a moral Order instituted by our ancestors in the Holy Land to recall the recollection of the most sublime truths in the midst of the innocent pleasures of society.

"The kings, princes, and nobles, when they returned from Palestine into their native dominions, established Lodges. At



the time of the last Crusade several Lodges had already been erected in Germany, Italy, Spain, France, and from the last in Scotland, in consequence of the intimate relations which existed between those two countries.

"James Lord Steward of Scotland was the Grand Master of a Lodge established at Kilwinning in the west of Scotland, in the year 1236, a short time after the death of Alexander III., King of Scotland, and a year before John Baliol ascended the throne. This Scottish Lord received the Earls of Gloucester and Ulster, English and Irish noblemen, as Masons into his Lodge.

"By degrees our Lodges, our festivals, and solemnities, were neglected in most of the countries in which they had been established. Hence the silence of the historians of all nations, except Great Britain, on the subject of our Order. It was preserved, however, in all its splendor by the Scotch, to whom for several centuries the kings of France had intrusted the guardianship of their person.<sup>1</sup>

"After the lamentable reverses of the Crusades, the destruction of the Christian armies, and the triumph of Bendocdar, the Sultan of Egypt, in 1263, during the eighth and ninth Crusades, the great Prince Edward, son of Henry III., King of England, seeing that there would be no security for the brethren in the Holy Land when the Christians should have retired, led them away, and thus a colony of the Fraternity was established in England. As this prince was endowed with all the qualities of mind and heart which constitute the hero, he loved the fine arts and declared himself the protector of our Order. He granted it several privileges and franchises, and ever since the members of the confraternity have assumed the name of *Freemasons*. From this time, Great Britain became the seat of our sciences, the conservatrix of our laws, and the depository of our secrets. The religious dissensions which so fatally pervaded and rent all Europe during the 16th century caused our Order to degenerate from the grandeur and nobility of its origin. Several of our rites and usages, which were opposed to the prejudices of the times, were changed, disguised, or retrenched. Thus it is that several of

<sup>1</sup> Ramsay here refers to the company of musketeers, made up entirely of Scotchmen of noble birth, which formed the body-guard of the kings of France. The reader of Brother Walter Scott's *Waverley* novels will remember that the renowned Balafre, in the story of "Quentin Durward," was a member of this troop.



our brethren have, like the ancient Jews, forgotten the spirit of our laws and preserved only the letter and the outer covering. But from the British islands the ancient science is now beginning to pass into France."

Such was the theory of Ramsay, the principal points of which it is claimed for him he had already put into the Rite of six degrees which bears his name. This Rite might be called the mother of all the Rites which followed it and which in a few years covered the continent with a web of high degrees and of Masonic systems. All of these were based on the theory that Freemasonry was invented during the Crusades, and the great dogma of which, boldly stated by the Baron von Hund,<sup>1</sup> in his Rite of Strict Observance, was that every Freemason was a Templar.

Ramsay rejects all the legends which ascribe Freemasonry to the Patriarchs or to the ancient Mysteries, and thus he does not admit any connection with an Operative association. He looks to chivalry alone for the true source of the Fraternity.

He adopts the method of writing Masonic history previously pursued by Anderson. This was unfortunately followed by other writers of the 18th century, and has not been altogether abandoned at the present day. Ramsay makes his claims boldly, draws without limit upon his imagination, presents guesses in the place of facts, and shows no authority for anything that he advances.

As Mossdorf<sup>2</sup> says, since he cites no authority we are not bound to believe him on his simple word.

Ramsay's influence, however, as a man of ability, had its weight. The theory of the origin of Freemasonry among the Crusaders continued to be taught in some form or another by later writers. It was infused by the system-makers into most of the Rites that were afterwards founded. Indeed, it may be said that of all the Rites now existing, the English and American are the only ones in which some feature of this Templar theory may not be noted.

<sup>1</sup> Baron C. G. von Hund, born 1722, died 1776. Became a Freemason at twenty in Frankfort, Germany, and is supposed to have got the advanced degrees in Paris though he also visited England and Holland. He was an enthusiastic Freemason and the Lodge of Minerva at Leipsic struck a medal in his honor.

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Mossdorf, a scholarly Freemason, born 1757, died 1843, a member of the Lodge of Minerva, Leipsic. He edited some admirable books of reference, the *Maurerisches Taschenbuch*, the *Encyclopädie der Freimaurerei*, etc.



Hutchinson's theory varied somewhat from that of Ramsay. While recognizing the influence of the Crusades upon Freemasonry he is inclined to suppose that it was carried there by the Crusaders rather than that it was brought back by them to Europe.

Mentioning the organization of the Crusades by Peter the Hermit and the outpouring from Europe into Palestine of tens of thousand of saints, devotees, and enthusiasts to waste their blood and treasure in a barren and unprofitable adventure, he goes on to say that "it was deemed necessary that those who took up the sign of the Cross in this enterprise should form themselves into such societies as might secure them from spies and treacheries, and that each might know his companion and fellow-laborer by dark as well as by day. As it was with Jephtha's army at the passes of the Jordan, so also was it requisite in these expeditions that certain signs, signals, watchwords, or passwords should be known amongst them; for the armies consisted of various nations and various languages."

"No project or device," he thinks, "could answer the purpose of the Crusaders better than those of Freemasonry. The maxims and ceremonials attending the Master's Order had been previously established and were materially necessary on that expedition; for as the Mohammedans were also worshippers of the Deity, and as the enterprisers were seeking a country where the Freemasons were in the time of Solomon called into an association, and where some remains would certainly be found of the mysteries and wisdom of the ancients and of our predecessors, such degrees of Freemasonry as extended only to their being servants of the God of Nature would not have distinguished them from those they had to encounter, had they not assumed the symbols of the Christian faith."

The theory of Hutchinson is, then, that while there was some Freemasonry in Palestine before the coming of the Crusaders, it was only that earlier stage which he had already described as belonging to the Apprentice's degree, and which was what both he and Oliver have called "Patriarchal Masonry." The higher stage represented by the Master's degree was of course unknown to the Saracens as it was of Christian origin. The possession of this degree only could form any distinct mark between the Crusaders and their Moslem foes. This degree,



therefore, he thinks, was taken into Palestine as a war measure to supply the Christians with signs and words which would be to them a means of protection. The full force of the language bears only this meaning, that Freemasonry was used by the Crusaders not for purposes of peace, but for those of war. Such a sentiment is opposed to the true spirit of the institution. Nothing but a blind following of a pet theory could have led so good a Freemason as Hutchinson to adopt or to advance such an opinion.

Parting company with Ramsay, who had credited the origin of Freemasonry to the Knights and nobles of the Crusades, Hutchinson says the task of introducing it into Palestine belonged to the religious and not the military element of these expeditions.

"All the learning of Europe in those times," he continues, "was possessed by the religious; they had acquired the wisdom of the ancients, and the original knowledge which was in the beginning and now is the *truth*. Many of them had been initiated into the mysteries of Freemasonry, they were the projectors of the Crusades, and, as Solomon in the building of the Temple introduced orders and regulations for the conduct of the work, which his wisdom had been enriched with from the sages of antiquity, so that no confusion should happen during its progress, and so that the rank and office of each fellow-laborer might be distinguished and ascertained beyond the possibility of doubt, so in like manner the priests projecting the Crusades, being possessed of the mysteries of Freemasonry, the knowledge of the ancients, and of the universal language which survived the confusion of Shinar, revived the orders and regulations of Solomon, and initiated the legions therein who followed them to the Holy Land — hence that secrecy which attended the Crusades."

Hutchinson ends this group of beliefs, heaped one upon another, without the slightest attempt to historically check up a single statement, by claiming that "among other evidences which authorize us in the conjecture that Freemasons went to the Holy Wars, is the doctrine of that Order of Freemasons called the *Higher Order*," that is to say, the advanced degrees, which he says that he was led to believe was of Scottish origin. He probably got this idea from the theory of Ramsay. Be that as it may, he thinks "it conclusively proved that the Freemasons were Crusaders"; a finding of fact that it would be difficult to



draw by any known rules of logic. The fact (if it be admitted) that these further degrees were invented in Scotland by no means proves that the Freemasons who had them went to the Crusades. It is impossible, indeed, to find any natural link or relation between the two things.

However, the legend referring to the founding in Scotland of a system of Freemasonry at the time of the crushing of the Order and the burning of Jacques de Molay belongs to another portion of the legendary history of Freemasonry and we shall therefore deal with it in a separate chapter.

Von Hammer-Purgstall shows to what shifts for arguments those are reduced who pretend that the institution of Freemasonry was derived at the Crusades, by the Knights Templar, from the secret societies of the East. He says, as a proof of the truth of this theory, which indeed he makes as a charge against the Templars, that their secret maxims, particularly in so far as they relate to the giving up of positive religion and the spreading of their power by the gain of castles and strong places, seem to have been the same as those of the Order of Assassins. The similarity also of the white dress and red ribbon of the Assassins with the white mantle and red cross of the Templars he thinks is certainly remarkable. Hence he assumes that as the Assassins were a branch of the Ishmaeleeh, whom he calls the "Illuminati of the East," and as the former was a secret society of revolutionary kind, which is a feature that he also credits to the Freemasons, he takes it for granted that the Assassins supplied the Templars with those ideas of organization and doctrine out of which they created the system of Freemasonry that they afterward brought to Europe.

A series of arguments like this is scarcely worthy of a serious reply. That the Templars ever gave up the precepts of positive religion, either at that early period of their career or at any later time, is a mere guess, based on the charges made by the malice of a wicked King and a still more vicious Pope. The making of forts and castles for their protection, by both the Templars and the Assassins, arose from the military instinct which teaches all armies to provide the means of defense when in the presence of an enemy. And lastly, the argument drawn from the similarity of the costumes of both Orders is so childish as to require no other



answer than that as the mantle and cross of the Templars were bestowed upon them, the former by Pope Honorius and the latter by Pope Eugenius, therefore they could not have been indebted to the Assassins for either. The best reply to the slanders of Von Hammer-Purgstall is the fact that to sustain his views he was obliged to depend on such poverty of argument.

We may fairly accept as historically true the fact that the Templars, or perhaps we ought to say the architects and builders, who accompanied them and were engaged in the construction of their forts and castles in the Holy Land, the remains of some of which still exist, brought with them to Europe some new views of Saracenic building art. These they very probably taught to the gilds of Freemasons already existing in Europe. While we may believe so much at least yet we may dismiss the further consideration of that subject as having little or nothing to do with the question of how much Freemasonry as a secret society was indebted for its origin to Templarism.

Of the direct connection of the Templars with Freemasonry at the time of the Crusades, there are only two propositions that have been maintained. One is that the Templars carried Freemasonry with them to Palestine and there used it for defense against their enemies, the Saracens.

This theory has not the slightest evidence. No historian living in the time of the Crusades makes any mention of such a fact. Before we can even discuss it as something worthy of study we must search for the missing proof, that in the 11th and 12th centuries Freemasonry was anything more than an Operative institution. Was it likely that any Crusaders of influence, such as nobles and knights, were members of such a body? As a mere guess it wants every element of likelihood. Hutchinson, the most prominent writer who maintains the theory, has evidently mixed up the Crusaders of the 11th and 12th centuries who fought in Palestine, with the Templars who are said to have fled to Scotland in the 14th century and to have there invented certain advanced degrees. This seeming confusion of dates gives an absurd feature to the claim of Hutchinson.

Another form was long ago given to this theory by a writer in the *Freemasons' Magazine*,<sup>1</sup> which has the air of greater likelihood

<sup>1</sup> *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, vol. iv, p. 962, London, 1858, Part I.



at least. The theory that he has advanced will be best given in his own language: "The traveling bodies of Freemasons (who existed in Europe at the time of the Crusades) consisted of brethren well skilled in every branch of knowledge; among their ranks were many learned ecclesiastics, whose names survive to the present day in the magnificent edifices which they assisted to erect. The Knights of the Temple, themselves a body of military monks partaking both of the character of soldiers and priests, preserved in their Order a rank exclusively clerical, the individuals belonging to which took no part in warfare, who were skilled in letters, and devoted themselves to the civil and religious affairs of the Order; they were the historians of the period, and we know that all the learning of the time was in their keeping in common with the other ecclesiastics of the time. From the best information we are possessed of regarding the Order, we believe there can be little doubt that these learned clerks introduced the whole fabric of Craft Masonry into the body of the Templars, and that not only was the Speculative branch of the science by them incorporated with the laws and organization of the Knights, but to their Operative skill were the Templars indebted for their triumphs in architecture and fortification. And it is worthy of remark that in the records of the Order we find no mention of individual architects or builders; we may therefore not unfairly draw the inference that the whole body were made participators in the knowledge and mysteries of the Craft."

To this theory there is the same objection that has been already made to the other, that it is wholly unsupported by historical authority, and that it is a mere group of bold guesses by a fanciful mind. Strange, indeed, is the reasoning which infers that all the Templars were builders because there is no mention of such a class in the records of the Order. That silence would rather indicate that among the Knights no such class existed. The Knights probably employed architects and builders who may have belonged to the gilds of Traveling Freemasons before they went to Palestine. But there is no evidence, and it is by no means likely, that they would engage in anything more than the duties of their profession, or that there would be on the part of the Knights devoted to a work of war any tendency to take share in their peaceful association.



The second theory is that the Templars derived their secret doctrines and ceremonies from the sect of the Assassins, or from the Druses of Mount Lebanon, and that on their return to Europe they organized the Fraternity of Freemasons. This theory is the direct opposite of the former one. It, too, has neither history to show its truth as a statement nor probability to support it as a surmise.

The doctrine of a German writer, Adler, he advanced in his book, *De Drusis Montis Libani*, published in 1786 at Rome. But its foremost friend was Von Hammer-Purgstall, an active foe of both Templarism and Freemasonry, and who made it the basis of his charges against both institutions. Nevertheless, it has been accepted with his usual excess confidence by Higgins in his work, *Anacalypsis*.

Brewster, in the *History of Freemasonry*, adopts the same theory. "As the Order of the Templars," he says, "was originally formed in Syria, and existed there for a considerable time, it would be no improbable supposition that they received their Masonic knowledge from the Lodges in that quarter."

But Brewster, or the author of the work called *Lawrie's History*, had already, with equal powers of quibbling and with a like boldness of estimate, credited the origin of Freemasonry to the ancient Mysteries, to the Dionysiac Fraternity of Artificers, to the Essenes, the Druids, and to Pythagoras. Therefore we may safely bury his theory of its Templar origin in the grave of what ought to be, and probably are, exploded claims. All these various arguments tend only to show how the bias of pet opinions may warp the judgment of the most learned scholars.

On the whole, we will be safe in the belief that, whatever may have been the valiant deeds of the Crusaders, and especially of the Templars, in their unsuccessful attempt to rescue the Holy Sepulcher from the infidels, they were unlikely to divert their attention from that great work to follow up an enterprise so out of touch with the war spirit of their main business as that of setting up a peaceful society of builders. With the Crusades and the Crusaders, Freemasonry had no connection that can be sustained by historical proof or even the showing of great probability. As to the supposed relation of Templarism to the Freemasonry of Scotland, that forms another and an entirely different legend that we must not overlook. A separate chapter is given to it in this work.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

### THE STORY OF THE SCOTTISH TEMPLARS



THE story connecting the Knights Templar with Freemasonry in Scotland, after their return from the Crusades and after the crushing of their Order, forms one of the most interesting and romantic legends that is offered in the history of our Fraternity. The elements of history and tradition are so mingled with its incidents that only with difficulty can they be satisfactorily separated. There are some writers of reputation who accept everything that has been said concerning the connection in the 14th century of the Freemasons of Scotland with the Templars who were then in that country, or who escaped to it as a place of safety from the attacks of the French king. Such writers hold these statements as a trustworthy account of events which actually occurred. There are others who reject the whole as a myth or fable which has no support in history.

Here, as in most other cases, the middle course appears to be the safest and the best. While there are some parts of the story based upon historical records, there are others which certainly are without the benefit of such evidence. In the present chapter we shall try, by careful and fair tests, to separate the conflicting elements and to sever the historical from the legendary or purely traditional portions of the reports.

But it will be necessary, in clearing the way for any faithful study of the subject, to look briefly at the history of those events which were connected with the suppression of the ancient Order of Knights Templar in France at the beginning of the 14th century.

The Templars on leaving the Holy Land, upon the unfortunate ending of the last Crusade and the fall of Acre, halted for refuge in the island of Cyprus. After some vain attempts to



regain a footing in Palestine and to renew their contests with the infidels, who were now in complete possession of that country, the Knights left from Cyprus and went to their several Commanderies in Europe, among which those in France were the most wealthy and the most numerous.

Philip IV., known in history by the nickname of Philip the Fair, reigned on the French throne at this period of history, and Clement V. was the Pontiff of the Roman Church. Never before had the crown or the tiara been worn by a more greedy king or a more faithless pope.

Clement, when he was Bishop of Bordeaux, had got the help of the French King toward his election to the papacy by obligating himself by an oath on the sacrament to fulfil six conditions demanded of him by the King. The last of these was reserved as a secret until after Clement became Pope. When this latter demand came to light it proved to bind him to destroy the Templars, an Order whose power Philip envied and whose wealth he coveted.

Pope Clement, who had removed his residence from Rome to Poitiers in France, called the heads of the military Orders to appear before him for the purpose, as he falsely pretended, of preparing the plans to begin a new Crusade.

Jacques de Molay, the Grand Master of the Templars, therefore went to the Papal court. While there the King of France offered a series of charges against the Order, upon which he asked that it be destroyed and that its leaders be punished.

The story of the events that followed at once upon the making of these charges form what has well been called a black page in the history of the Order. On the 13th of October, 1307, the Grand Master and one hundred and thirty-nine Knights were arrested in the Palace of the Temple at Paris. Similar arrests were on the same day made in various parts of France. The arrested Templars were thrown into prison and loaded with chains. They were not given sufficient food and were refused the comforts of religion. Twenty-six princes and nobles of the court of France appeared against them. But even these attacks were not enough. Before any verdict had been set forth by the trial judges, the shameless Pope Clement issued a bull of excommunication, his official curse, against all persons who should give the Templars aid or kindness.



Then came trials. If these had not been so cruelly unjust they would have been worse than absurd. The rack and the torture were freely applied. Those who stood firm in a denial of guilt were given imprisonment for life or they met death by burning at the stake. Addison says that one hundred and thirteen were burnt in Paris and others died likewise in Lorraine, in Normandy, at Carcassonne, and at Senlis.

The last scene of the tragedy was enacted on the 11th of March, 1314. Jacques de Molay, the Grand Master of the Order, after being held in prison for six years and a half, was publicly burnt in front of the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris.

Thus the Order was totally crushed in France and its property taken away. The other monarchs of Europe followed the example of the King of France in abolishing the Order in their countries. But, in a more merciful spirit, they did not inflict the death penalty upon the Knights. Outside of France, in all the kingdoms of Europe, not a Templar was put to death.

However, the Order was everywhere destroyed, and a spoil made of its vast wealth, notwithstanding that in every country beyond the influence of the Pope and the King of France its general innocence was upheld. The claim is made that in Portugal it changed its name to that of the Knights of Christ — everywhere else the Order ceased to exist. For reasons given on another page some hold that the Portuguese Knights of Christ are in no particular related to the Knights Templar.

Writers, like Burnes,<sup>1</sup> maintain that the persecution of the Templars in the 14th century did not close the history of the Order, but that there has been a series without a halt of Knights Templar from the 12th century down to these modern days.

Dr. Burnes refers to the Order of the Temple and the claim that has been made of the transfer of the powers of Grand Master de Molay to Johannes Marcus Larmenius.<sup>2</sup> With this question and with the so-called "Charter of Transmission," the

<sup>1</sup> "Sketch of the History of the Knights Templar," by James Burnes, LL.D., F.R.S., etc., London, 1840, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> A document called the "Charter of Transmission" is in the archives of the Grand Priory of England. It claims to be a formal transfer from Jacques de Molay in prison, February 13, 1314, to Larmenius and his successors of the position and powers as Grand Master of the Order of the Temple. Most Masonic students have not found these claims worthy of belief. For copy of the deed and all available information consult the Mackay-Hughan-Hawkins "Encyclopædia of Freemasonry."



topic we are about to discuss has no connection, and we therefore make no further allusion to them.

From the influence of natural causes after the death of the Grand Master and the cruel crushing of the Order in France, it is likely that many of the Knights must have sought safety by flight to other countries. This seems evident without the necessity of any historical proof. It is to their acts in Scotland that we are now to direct our attention.

There are two legends in existence relating to the connection of Templarism with the Freemasonry of Scotland, each of which will require our separate attention. The first may be called the Legend of Bruce, and the other the Legend of D'Aumont.

In Scotland the possessions of the Order were very extensive. Their Preceptories were scattered in various parts of the country. A Papal inquisition or court was held at Holyrood in 1309 to examine and, of course, to destroy the Templars. At this trial only two Knights, Walter de Clifton, Grand Preceptor of Scotland, and William de Middleton appeared. The others fled. Robert Bruce was then marching to meet and repel the invasion of King Edward of England and the Templars are said to have joined the army of the Scottish leader. Thus far the various accounts of the Bruce Legend agree, but in the other details there are differences not easily settled.

According to one version, the Templars showed great bravery and ability at the battle of Bannockburn, which was fought on St. John the Baptist's Day, 1314. After the battle a new Order was formed, called the Royal Order of Scotland, into which the Templars were admitted. But Oliver thinks very justly that the two Orders were separate from each other.

Thory says that Robert Bruce, King of Scotland under the title of Robert I., created on the 24th of June, 1314, after the battle of Bannockburn, the Order of St. Andrew of the Thistle, to which was afterward added that of Heredom, for the sake of the Scottish Freemasons, a part of the thirty thousand men who had fought with a hundred thousand English soldiers. He retained for himself and his successors the title of Grand Master and founded at Kilwinning the Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Heredom.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Acta Latomorum," tome i, p. 6.



The Manual of the Order of the Temple says that the Templars, at the suggestion of Robert Bruce, put themselves under the banners of this new Order whose initiations were based on those of the Templars. For this desertion they were expelled by John Mark Larmenius who is claimed to have been the lawful successor of Jacques de Molay.<sup>1</sup>

None of these statements are capable of historical proof. The Order of Knights of St. Andrew or of the Thistle was not created by Bruce in 1314, but by James II. in 1440.

There is no evidence that the Templars ever made a part of the Royal Order of Heredom. At this day the two are entirely distinct. Nor is it now accepted as a fact that the Royal Order was founded by Bruce after the battle of Bannockburn, although such is the basis of the esoteric legend. On the contrary, it is supposed to have been the work of Michael Ramsay in the 18th century. The remarks of Bro. Lyon, who has made the Freemasonry of Scotland his especial study, are well worth quoting on this subject:

"The ritual of the Royal Order of Scotland embraces," he says, "what may be termed a spiritualization of the supposed symbols and ceremonies of the Christian architects and builders of primitive times, and so closely associates the sword with the trowel as to lead to the second degree being denominated an Order of Masonic Knighthood. This its recipients are asked to believe was first conferred on the field of Bannockburn, as a reward for the valor that had been displayed by a body of Templars who aided Bruce in that memorable victory; and that afterward a Grand Lodge of the Order was established by the King at Kilwinning, with the reservation of the office of Grand Master to him and his successors on the Scottish throne. It is further asserted that the Royal Order and the Masonic Fraternity of Kilwinning were governed by the same head. As regards the claims to antiquity, and a royal origin that are advanced in favor of this rite, it is proper to say that modern inquiries have shown these to be purely fabulous. The credence that is given to that part of the legend which associates the Order with the ancient Lodge of Kilwinning is based on the assumed certainty that that Lodge possessed in former times a knowledge of other degrees of

<sup>1</sup> "Manuel des Chevaliers de l'Ordre du Temple," p. 8.



Masonry than those of St. John. But such is not the case. The fraternity of Kilwinning never at any period practiced or acknowledged other than the Craft degrees; neither does there exist any tradition worthy of the name, local or national, nor has any authentic document yet been discovered that can in the remotest degree be held to identify Robert Bruce with the holding of Masonic Courts, or the institution of a secret society at Kilwinning.”<sup>1</sup>

Such a statement was made by a writer who from his position as Grand Secretary and his opportunities as a scholarly Scottish Freemason was well able to find the proofs, if there were any to be discovered. We may therefore safely conclude that the Bruce and Bannockburn Legend of Scottish Templarism is to be deemed a pure myth, without the slightest historical element to behold it.

Another legend connects the Templars in Scotland with Freemasonry and deserves our attention.

This legend says that in order to escape from the cruelties that followed the erasing of the Order by the King of France, a certain Templar, named D'Aumont, accompanied by seven others, disguised as mechanics or Operative Freemasons, fled into Scotland and there secretly founded another Order. To preserve as much as possible the ancient name of Templars as well as to retain in memory and to do honor to the Freemasons in whose clothing they had disguised themselves when they fled, they adopted the name of *Maçons* in connection with the word *Franc*, and called themselves *Franc Maçons*. This they did because the old Templars were for the most part Frenchmen, and as the word *Franc* means both *French* and *Free*, and *Maçon* means *Mason*, when they established themselves in England they called themselves Freemasons. As the ancient Order had been founded for the purpose of rebuilding the Temple at Jerusalem, the new Order maintained their bond of union, and preserved the memory and the design of those who had gone before, by building symbolically spiritual Temples dedicated to Virtue, Truth, and Light, and to the honor of the Grand Architect of the Universe.

<sup>1</sup> “History of the Lodge of Edinburgh,” by David Murray Lyon, chap. xxxii, p. 307.



Such is the Legend as given by a writer in the Dutch *Freemasons' Almanac*, from which it is cited in the London *Freemasons' Quarterly Review*.<sup>1</sup>

Clavel, in his *Picturesque History of Freemasonry*,<sup>2</sup> gives it more in detail almost in the words of Von Hund.

After the execution of Jacques de Molay, Peter d'Aumont, the Provincial Grand Master of Auvergne, with two Commanders and five Knights, fled for safety and directed their course toward Scotland, concealing their identity during the journey under the guise of Operative Freemasons. Having landed on the Scottish Island of Mull they there met the Grand Commander George Harris and several other brethren, with whom they resolved to continue the Order. D'Aumont was elected Grand Master in a Chapter held on St. John's Day, 1313. To protect themselves from all chance of discovery and persecution they adopted symbols taken from architecture and took the title of Freemasons. In 1361 the Grand Master of the Temple transferred the seat of the Order to the old city of Aberdeen, Scotland, and from that time it spread, as Freemasonry, through Italy, Germany, France, Portugal, Spain, and other places.<sup>3</sup>

On this legend the Baron von Hund founded his Rite of Strict Observance. With the false documents in his keeping, he attempted, but without success, to obtain the consent of the Congress of Wilhelmsbad to his dogma that every Freemason was a Templar.

Though this doctrine made but slow progress in Germany, it was more readily accepted in France. Already it had been made known there by the Chapter of Clermont, into whose Templar system Von Hund had been initiated.

For many years the opinion has existed among Masonic writers that the Chevalier Ramsay was the real author of the doctrine of the Templar origin of Freemasonry, and that to him

<sup>1</sup> See *Freemasons' Quarterly Review*, London, 1843, p. 501, where the Legend is given in full as above.

<sup>2</sup> "Histoire Pittoresque de la Franc Maçonnerie," p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> This legend is most doubtful. Nothing now is known of Grand Commander George Harris, and the date of the election to the Grand Mastership of D'Aumont actually precedes the date we have of the death of Jacques de Molay. See also Bro. Dr. Wm. Begemann's "Die Tempelherren und die Freimaurer," Berlin, 1906.



we are really indebted (if the debt has any value) for the D'Aumont Legend. If so, the source whence it sprang is fair evidence that it is more fiction than fact. The inventive genius of Ramsay is well known. In making or reporting legends he cared but little for the support of history. If his genius, his learning, and his zeal had been given, not to forming new Masonic systems, but to a thorough study of the true origin of the institution, working only upon and for reliable history, very great benefit would have come from his labors. The useless desert which for three-fourths of a century spread over the continent, bearing no fruit except fanciful theories, absurd systems, and unnecessary degrees, would have been occupied in all probability by a race of Masonic scholars whose researches directed to the creation of a genuine history would have lessened much of the labor of our modern students.

The Masonic scholars of that long period, which began with Ramsay and has hardly yet ended, assumed for the most part rather the part of poets than of historians. They did not remember the wise saying of Cervantes, that the poet may say or sing, not as things have been but as they ought to have been, while the historian must write of them as they really were and not as he thinks they ought to have been. Hence we have a mass of traditional rubbish in which there is a great deal of falsehood with very little truth.

Such is the Legend of Peter d'Aumont and his work for the Order of Knights Templar in Scotland. Without a particle of historical evidence for its support, it has nevertheless exerted a powerful influence on the Masonic organization of even the present day. We find its effects show in the most important rites and give a Templar form to many degrees. Perhaps the use of Templarism in the modern Masonic system is mainly to be credited to ideas suggested by this D'Aumont Legend.

There appears to be some difficulty in adjusting the supposed opinions of the outcast churchless Templars with the approved faith of the Scottish Freemasons. To meet this objection a third legend was invented, in which it was stated that, after the abolition of the Templars, the clerical part of the Order — that is, the chaplains and priests — united in Scotland to revive and transfer it into Freemasonry. This Legend has not met with many sup-



porters and was never strongly urged. We need therefore do no more than thus briefly mention it.

The Legend of D'Aumont has exerted an influence in mingling together the elements of Templarism and Freemasonry, as we see at the present day in Britain and in America, and in the advanced degrees formed on the continent of Europe. But the dogma usually credited to Ramsay, that every Freemason is a Templar, has been denied, and the truth of the Legend doubted by nearly all Masonic scholars.

Dr. Burnes, who believed in a lawful origin of the French Order of the Temple, as being directly derived from De Molay through Larmenius, and who, therefore, subscribed without hesitation to the authenticity of the "Charter of Transmission," yet he does not halt in calling Von Hund "an adventurer" and his Legend of D'Aumont "a plausible tale."

That part of the Legend relating to the transfer of the chief headquarters of the Templars to Aberdeen, Scotland, causes Dr. Burnes to say, "The imposture was soon detected, and it was even discovered that he had himself enticed and initiated the ill-fated Pretender into his fabulous order of chivalry. The delusions on this subject had taken such a hold in Germany, that they were not altogether dispelled until a deputation had actually visited Aberdeen and found amongst the worthy and astonished brethren there no trace either of very ancient Templars or of Freemasonry."<sup>1</sup>

Burnes is in error with this last assertion. It is alleged that the Lodge of Aberdeen was instituted in 1541, though, as its more ancient minutes have been, as it is said, destroyed by fire, its present records go no further back than 1670. Bro. Lyon agrees with Burnes in the statement that the Aberdeenians were much surprised when first told that their Lodge was an ancient center of the Knightly Degrees.<sup>2</sup>

Wilhelm Friedrich Wilke, a German writer of great ability, has attacked the truth of this Scottish Legend with a closeness of reasoning and a vigor of arguments that leave but little room for answer.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Burnes, "Sketch of the History of the Knights Templar," p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 420.

<sup>3</sup> In his "Geschichte der Tempelherren." We have availed ourselves of an excellent analysis of it in Lyon's translation of J. G. Findel's "History of Freemasonry."



As he gives the Legend in a slightly different form, it may be interesting to quote it, as well as his course of argument.

"The Legend relates," he says, "that after the suppression of the Order the head of the Templar clergy, Peter of Boulogne, fled from prison and took refuge with the Commander Hugh, Wildgrave of Salm, and thence escaped to Scotland with Sylvester von Grumbach. Thither the Grand Commander Harris and Marshal d'Aumont had likewise betaken themselves, and these three preserved the secrets of the Order of Templars and transferred them to the Fraternity of Freemasons."

Commenting on this statement, Wilke says it is true that Peter of Boulogne fled from prison, but where he went never has been known. The Wildgrave of Salm never was in prison. But the legendist entangled himself in saying that Peter left the Wildgrave Hugh and went to Scotland with Sylvester von Grumbach, for Hugh and Sylvester are one and the same person. His title was Count Sylvester Wildgrave, and Grumbach was the name of his Templar Commandery. Hugh of Salm, also Wildgrave and Commander of Grumbach, never took refuge in Scotland, and after the abolition of the Order was made Prebendary, a paid official, of the Cathedral of Mayence.

Wilke thinks that the continuation of the Templar Order was credited to Scotland because the higher degrees of Freemasonry, having reference in a political sense to the Pretender, Edward Stuart, were called Scotch. Scotland is, therefore, the cradle of the advanced degrees of Freemasonry. Here Mackey was inclined to differ from him and disposed to refer the explanation to the circumstance that Ramsay, the inventor of the Legend and the first maker of the high degrees, was a native of Scotland and was born in the neighborhood of Kilwinning. To these degrees he gave the name of Scottish Masonry, in a spirit of nationality, and therefore Scotland was supposed to be their birthplace.<sup>1</sup>

Wilke says that Harris and D'Aumont are not mentioned in the real history of the Templars and therefore, if they were

<sup>1</sup> Since the time of Bro. Mackey we are the less inclined toward even the action then believed true of Ramsay. Bro. Chetwode Crawley has raised a doubt of Ramsay being a Freemason, that the famous oration is not specific in reference to High Degrees — the mention being Templar and not necessarily Masonic, etc. For a discussion of these and other matters and authorities bearing upon them, see "The Templar Legends in Freemasonry" in "Ars Quatuor Coronati," vol. xxvi, part 1.



Knights, they could not have had any prominence in the Order. Neither would have been likely to have been chosen by the fleeing Knights as their Grand Master.

He concludes by saying that of course some of the hunted Templars found their way to Scotland, and it may be believed that certain of the brethren were admitted into the building fraternities. That is no reason why either the Lodges of builders or the Knights of St. John should be considered as a continuation of the Templar Order because they both received Templar fugitives. The less is this likely as the building gilds were not, like the Templars, of chivalrous and free-thinking worldlings, but pious workmen who cherished the pure doctrines of religion.

Theorists, in the desire to link up Templarism with Freemasonry, have brought about the invention of other fables in which the Hiram Legend of the Master's Degree is replaced by others referring to events said to have occurred in the history of the knightly Order. The most ingenious of these is the following:

Some time before the destruction of the Order of Templars, a certain sub-prior of Montfauçon, named Carolus de Monte Carmel, was murdered by three traitors. From the events that followed this murder, it is said that an important part of the ritual of Freemasonry has been taken. The assassins of the sub-prior of Montfauçon hid his body in a grave, and in order to locate the spot, planted a young thorn-tree there. The Templars, searching for the body, had their attention drawn to the spot by the tree, and in that way they discovered the victim's remains. The Legend goes on to tell of the taking up of the body and its removal to another grave, in striking similarity with the same events mentioned in the Legend of Hiram.

Still another theory connects the death of Jacques de Molay, Grand Master of the Templars, with the Legend of the Third Degree. It supposes that in that Legend, as now preserved in the Masonic ritual, Hiram has been made to replace De Molay, that the fact of the Templar entrance into Freemasonry might be concealed.

Thus the events which in the genuine Masonic Legend are referred to Hiram Abif are in the Templar Legend made applicable to Jacques de Molay. The three assassins are said to be Pope Clement V., Philip the Fair, King of France, and a Templar



named Naffodei who betrayed the Order. They have even attempted to explain the mystical search for the body by the invention of a fable that on the night after Jacques de Molay had been burnt at the stake, certain Knights diligently sought for his remains amongst the ashes. They could find only some bones to which the flesh, though scorched, still adhered, but which it left immediately upon their being handled. In this way they explain the origin of the substitute word, according to the mistranslation too generally accepted.

Nothing could more clearly show the absurdity of the Legend than this adoption of a popular interpretation of the meaning of this word, an explanation made by someone utterly ignorant of the Hebrew language. The word, as is now well known to all scholars, has a totally different meaning.

We need not look to so unessential a part of the story for proof that the whole Legend of the relationship of Templarism with Freemasonry does not fit in with the facts of history. The tale asks too much to be seriously accepted.

The Legend of Bruce and Bannockburn has already been examined by us and will not stand the test for it has no basis in history.

The other legend, that makes D'Aumont and his companions pioneers of the Masonic Order in Scotland by uniting the Knights with the fraternity of builders, is equally without a foundation in history. Besides, there is a feature of improbability if not of impossibility about it. The Knights Templar were an aristocratic Order, high-born gentlemen who had accepted the soldier's life as their vocation, and who were governed by the customs of chivalry. In those days of old there was a much wider line of separation drawn between the various sections of society than exists at the present time. The "belted knight" was at the top of the social scale, the mechanic at the bottom.

Therefore, it is almost out of the question to believe that because their Order had been destroyed, these proud soldiers of the Cross, whose military life had unfitted them for any other pursuit except that of war, would have thrown aside their swords and their spurs and taken in hand the trowel. With the use of this peaceful tool and of all the mysteries of the builder's craft they were wholly strangers by training, taste or purpose. To



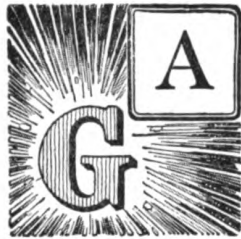
become Operative Freemasons, they must at once give up all the agreeable habits and pursuits of social life in which they had been instructed from early youth. That a Knight Templar would have gone into some religious house of monks as a retreat from the world whose usage of his Order had disgusted him, or taken refuge in some other chivalric Order, might reasonably happen, as was actually the case. That these Knights would have willingly become Stonemasons and daily workmen is a claim too absurd to get full belief even from the most trusting.

We may then be confident that those legendists who have sought by their own invented traditions to trace the origin of Freemasonry to Templarism, or to prove any unity of contact between the two institutions, have failed in their object. They may have attempted to write a history. They have succeeded in making a romance more open to the blunt denial of the reader than to permit of his having doubt that it is what it claims to be.



## CHAPTER THIRTY

### FREEMASONRY AND THE HOUSE OF STUART



ANOTHER theory connects the royal house of the Stuarts with Freemasonry as an institution to be adopted and used. This, not on account of its own particular value on moral and similar grounds, but that it might serve as a political power to restore an exiled family to a throne which the follies and even the crimes of its members had lost. Such a theory is so opposed to all that has been supposed to be in accord with the true spirit and character of Freemasonry, that one would hardly believe that this was ever seriously accepted as a fact were it not for the many proofs that exist of that curious conclusion.

The history of the family of Stuart, from the coming of James I. to the throne of England to the death of the last of his family line, the young Pretender, is a tale of follies and sometimes of crimes. The reign of James was marked only by arts which could gain for him through these later years no higher standing than that of being vain of his learning, a royal pedant. His son and successor, Charles I., was beheaded by an outraged people whose rights and liberties he had sought to betray. His son, Charles II., after a long exile was finally restored to the throne, only to pass a life of lust and idleness. On his death he was succeeded by his brother, James II., a prince noted as a bigot. Zealous for the Roman Catholic religion, he aimed to restore its power and influence among his subjects who were for the most part Protestants. To save the Established Church and the religion of the nation, his subjects rebelled and called to the throne the Protestant Prince of Orange. James, giving up the crown, fled to France. Here he was kindly received with his followers by Louis XIV., who could, however, say nothing better of him than that he had given three crowns for a mass. From 1688, the date



of his flight, until the year 1745 the exiled family were engaged in repeated but useless efforts to get back the throne.

We may suppose that in these attempts the friends of the house of Stuart were not unwilling to accept the influence of the Masonic institution as one of the most powerful weapons to gain their purpose.

Had that been done, the institution would have been changed from its true design. The object of the Jacobites, as they were called, or the followers of King James, was not to raise or even maintain the character of Freemasonry but only to advance the cause of the Pretender.

However, it must be understood that this theory connecting the Stuarts with Freemasonry does not take it for granted that the Third or Master's degree was invented by them or their followers. All that it has usually claimed is that there were certain changes in applying its legend. Thus, the Temple was understood to refer to the monarchy, the death of its Builder to the execution of Charles I., or to the loss of the succession by the forced removal of James II., and the dogma of the resurrection to mean the return of the Stuart family to the throne of England.

One of the earliest instances of this political view of the Master's Legend was that reported after James II. left the throne and retired to France. The mother of James was Henrietta Maria, queen of Charles I. The Jacobites called her "the Widow." The exiled James became "the Widow's son," receiving thus the title applied in the Masonic Legend to Hiram Abif, whose death was in that way a symbol of the loss of the throne and the driving of the Stuarts from England.

This idea was said to be carried out to such an extent as to cause a new substitute word to be used for the Master's degree in the place of the old one, which was known to the English Freemasons at the time of the Revival in 1717. This new word was not, as the significant words of Freemasonry usually are, of Hebrew origin, but was taken from the Gaelic language. This seems to have been done in compliment to the Highlanders, most of whom were loyal to the Stuart cause.

The word *Macbenac* is taken from the Gaelic *mac*, a son, and *benach*, blessed, and thus means the "blessed son." This word may have been applied by the Jacobites to James, who was thus



not only a "widow's son" but a "blessed" one, too. Freemasonry was in that case made disloyal.

A further claim is made that, to mark their political hate for the enemies of the Stuart family, they gave to the foremost leaders of the republican cause, the names which in the Freemasonry of old had been those of the unworthy in the Third Degree. In the Stuart Freemasonry we find these persons given names, generally far from clear, in meaning, but, when they can be explained, evidently referring to some well-known enemy of the Stuart plans. Thus, *Romvel* is probably made out of *Cromwell*, and *Jubelum Guibbs* perhaps was intended to attack the name of the Rev. Adam Gib, an opposing clergyman, who, when the Pretender was in Edinburgh in 1745, used bitterly expressed sermons for five successive Sundays against him.

But it was in the making of the high degrees that the claim has frequently been made that the friends of the Stuarts had the most use of Freemasonry as a political weapon. The invention of these high degrees is usually credited in the first place to the Chevalier Ramsay. He enjoyed intimate relations with the exiled family, having been selected by the titular James III., or, as he was commonly known in England, the Old Pretender, as the tutor of his two sons, Charles Edward and Henry, the former of whom becoming the Young Pretender, and the latter Cardinal York.

Ramsay was warmly attached, by this relationship, by his nationality as a Scotchman, and by his religion as a Roman Catholic, to the Stuarts and their cause. He doubtless accepted readily if indeed he did not actually invite the advances of those who had already begun to give a political aspect to the Masonic system, and who were seeking to use it for the Pretender. Ramsay therefore would be inclined by these strong reasons to aid in the altering of the old degrees or the making of new ones, so that these views might be worked into a special system. Hence in many of the high degrees invented either by Ramsay or by others of the same school of thought, we will find these traces of a political application to the family of Stuart, which were better understood at that time than they are now.

Thus, one of the high degrees received the name of "Grand Scottish Mason of James VI." Tessier says of this degree that



it is the principal degree of the ancient Master's system, and was revived and esteemed by James VI., King of Scotland and of Great Britain, and that it is still preserved in Scotland more than in any other kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

All of this is of course a mere fiction. But it tends to show that there may have been a sort of official admission of the use of Freemasonry by the Stuarts, who did not hesitate to give the name of the first founder of their house on the English throne to one of the degrees.

Another proof is found in the word *Jekson*, which is a special word in one of the high Scottish or the so-called Ramsay degrees. The word is thus spelled in the *Cahiers* or manuscript French rituals. There can be no doubt that *Jekson* is born of *Jacquesson*, a mongrel word compounded of the French *Jacques* and the English *son*, and denotes *the son of James*, that is, of James II. This son was the Old Pretender, or the Chevalier St. George, who after the death of his father took the empty title of James III., and whose son, the Young Pretender, was one of the pupils of the Chevalier Ramsay.

These, with many other similar instances, are very evident proofs that the friends of the Stuarts sought to add a political element to the spirit of Freemasonry so as to make it a useful tool for the bringing back of the exiled family and to put its head upon the throne of England. Of the truth of this fact, it is supposed that much support is to be found in the account of the various efforts for restoration made by the Stuarts.

When James II. made his flight from England he went to France, where he was kindly received by Louis XIV. He made his home while in Paris at the Jesuitical College of Clermont. There, it is said, he first sought, with the help of the Jesuits, to start a system of Freemasonry which should be used by his followers in their schemes for his return to the throne. After a useless visit to Ireland he came back to France and repaired to St. Germain-en-Laye, a city about ten miles northwest of Paris, where he lived until the time of his death in 1701.

One of the Stuart myths is that at the Château of St. Germain some of the high degrees were invented by the followers of James II., assisted by the Jesuits. The story is told by Robison,

<sup>1</sup> "Manuel Générale de Maçonnerie," p. 148.



an open enemy of Freemasonry, but who gives correctly the general form of the Stuart Legend as it was taught in the last century. Robison says:

"The revolution had taken place, and King James, with many of his most zealous adherents, had taken refuge in France.

"But they took Freemasonry with them to the Continent, where it was immediately received by the French, and cultivated with great zeal in a manner suited to the taste and habits of that highly polished people. The Lodges in France naturally became the rendezvous of the adherents of the exiled king, and the means of carrying on a correspondence with their friends in England."<sup>1</sup>

Robison claims that at this time the Jesuits took an active part in Freemasonry, and that they united with the English Lodges, with the view of creating an influence in favor of the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in England. But the supposed connection of the Jesuits with Freemasonry belongs to a different proposition, to be hereafter considered. He further says:

"It was in the Lodge held at St. Germain that the degree of *Chevalier Maçon Ecossais* was added to the three *symbolical* degrees of English Masonry. The Constitution, as imported, appeared too coarse for the refined taste of the French, and they must make Freemasonry more like the occupation of a gentleman. Therefore the English degrees of Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master were called *symbolical*, and the whole contrivance was considered either as typical of something more elegant or as a preparation for it. The degrees afterward superadded to this leave us in doubt which of these views the French entertained of our Freemasonry. But, at all events, this rank of Scotch Knight was called the *first* degree of the *Maçon Parfait* or *Perfect Mason*.

"There is a device belonging to this Lodge (at St. Germain) which deserves notice. A lion wounded by an arrow, and escaped from the stake to which he had been bound, with the broken rope still about his neck, is represented lying at the mouth of a cave, and occupied with mathematical instruments, which are lying near him. A broken crown lies at the foot of the stake. There can be little doubt but that this emblem alludes to the

<sup>1</sup> "Proofs of a Conspiracy," p. 27.



dethronement, the captivity, the escape, and the asylum of James II., and his hopes of re-establishment by the help of the loyal Brethren. This emblem is worn as the gorget or collar of the Scotch Knight. It is not very certain, however, when this degree was added, whether immediately after King James's abdication or about the time of the attempt to set his son on the British throne."<sup>1</sup>

Although it need not be denied that at a later period the original degrees were modified and changed in their application of the death of Hiram Abif to that of Charles I., or the dethronement of James II., and that higher degrees were created which still more definitely refer to the fate of the family of Stuart, yet it is uncertain that any such measures could have been taken during the lifetime of James II.

There are two periods referred to by Robison, the time of the abdication of James II., which was in 1688, and the attempt of James III., as he was called, to regain the throne, which was in 1715. He considers these as being, one or the other, the date of the making of the degree of Scottish Knight or Master. But this belief does not fit in well with the facts of history. If we assume that the symbolical degrees of Fellow Craft and Master had not been invented before 1717, or rather a few years later, it is absurd to speak of higher degrees built upon lower ones which did not at that time exist.

James II. died in 1701. We have no record now that there was at that time any sort of Speculative Freemasonry except that of the one degree which was common to Freemasons of all ranks. The so-called King James III., son of James II., succeeded to the claims and plans of his father, of course, in that year. But he made no attempt to enforce them until 1715, at which time he invaded Scotland with a fleet and army supplied by Louis XIV. Freemasonry was then in the same condition that it had been in 1701. There was no Master's degree to supply a legend capable of use for a political purpose, and the high degrees were altogether unknown. The Grand Lodge of England, the mother of all Continental as well as of English Freemasonry, was not established, or as Anderson improperly calls it, "revived," until 1717. The institution was not introduced into France until

<sup>1</sup> Robison, "Proofs of a Conspiracy," p. 28.



1725, and there could, therefore, have been no political Freemasonry practiced in a country where the pure Freemasonry of which it must have been born did not exist. Scottish or Stuart Freemasonry was a structure built upon the foundation of the symbolic Freemasonry of the three degrees. If in 1715 there was no such foundation, it follows, of course, that there could have been no building erected upon it.

The theory, therefore, that Stuart Freemasonry, or the making of degrees and the change of the old rituals to establish a system to be engaged in the support and the advancement of the falling cause of the Stuarts, was begun during the lifetime of James II., and that the royal château or palace of St. Germain-en-Laye was the place in which, between the years 1689 and 1701, these degrees and rituals were made, is based on a mere fable and not only improbable but absolutely impossible in all its details.

Rebold, however, gives another form to the Legend and traces the rise of Stuart Freemasonry to a much earlier period. He says in his *History of the Three Grand Lodges* that during the troubles which troubled Great Britain about the middle of the 17th century and after the beheading of Charles I. in 1649, the Freemasons of England, and especially those of Scotland, labored secretly for the re-establishment of the monarchy which had been overthrown by Cromwell. For the success of this purpose, Rebold claims they invented two higher degrees and gave to Freemasonry an entirely political character. The troubles to which the country was subject had already produced a separation of the Operative and the Accepted Freemasons — that is to say, of the builders by profession and those honorary members who were not merely working masons. These latter were men of power and high position. It was through their influence that Charles II., having been received as a Freemason during his exile, was enabled to recover the throne in 1660. This prince gratefully gave to Freemasonry the title of the "Royal Art," because it was Freemasonry that had principally contributed to the restoration of royalty.<sup>1</sup>

Ragon, in his *Masonic Orthodoxy*,<sup>2</sup> is even more direct of statement and presents some new details. He says that Ashmole

<sup>1</sup> "Histoire de Trois Grandes Loges," p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Ragon, "Orthodoxie Maçonnique," p. 29.



*PROCESSION OF THE SCALD MISERABLES IN 1741*















and other Brethren of the Rose Croix, seeing that the Speculative Freemasons were exceeding in numbers the Operative Freemasons, had given up the simple initiation of the latter and started new degrees founded on the Mysteries of Egypt and Greece. The Fellow Craft degree was made up in 1648, and that of Master a short time later. But the beheading of King Charles I., and the part taken by Ashmole in favor of the Stuarts resulted in great changes in this third and last degree, which had become of a Biblical character. The same period gave birth to the degrees of *Secret Master*, *Perfect Master*, and *Irish Master*, of which Charles I. was the hero under the name of Hiram. These degrees, says Ragon, were, however, not then openly practiced, although they afterward became the ornament of Ecossaism.<sup>2</sup>

We are also told that the non-operative or "Accepted" members of the organization secretly gave to the institution, especially in Scotland, a political tendency. The chiefs or protectors of the Craft in Scotland worked, in the dark, for the re-establishment of the throne. They may have made use of the quiet of the Masonic Lodges as places where they might hold their meetings and arrange their plans in safety. The death of Charles I. was to be avenged, his followers may therefore have made a Templar degree, in which the cruel murder of James de Molay called for revenge. Ashmole, who partook of that political sentiment, then modified the degree of Master and the Egyptian doctrine of which it was composed. They also say he made it conform to the two preceding degrees framing a Biblical allegory, incomplete and inconsistent, so that the initials of the sacred words of these three degrees should be those of the name and title of the Grand Master of the Templars.

Northouck,<sup>2</sup> who should have known better, shows respect to these trickeries of history by asserting that Charles II. was made a Freemason during his exile, although he carefully omits to tell us when, where, how, or by whom the initiation was effected. He does try, in a trifling style that ought to provoke

<sup>1</sup> This word is taken from the French "Ecosse" meaning Scotland, and has been applied, especially by Continental writers, to the system of degrees which for any reason may be credited to Scottish sources.

<sup>2</sup> "Constitutions," p. 141. John Northouck, born 1746, died 1816, a member of the Lodge of Antiquity, London, was the editor of the fifth edition of the "Book of Constitutions," published in 1784.



a smile, to prove that Charles II. took a great interest in Freemasonry and architecture, by mentioning the introduction to the charter of the Royal Society, an association whose object was solely the study of the philosophical and mathematical sciences, especially astronomy and chemistry, and whose members took no interest in the art of building or of the closely allied matters of Craft importance.

Dr. Oliver, whose unfortunate failing was to accept without careful examination all the statements of preceding writers, however absurd they might be, repeats in the same style these fictions about early Stuart Freemasonry.

He says that, about the close of the 17th century, the followers of James II. who went with the unlucky king in his exile carried Freemasonry to France. That there they laid the foundation of that system of innovation or tinkering which later on threw the Order into confusion, by the establishment of a new degree, which they called the *Chevalier Maçon Ecossais* or Scotch Knight Freemason, and that they worked out the details in the Lodge at St. Germain. Hence, adds Dr. Oliver, other degrees were invented in the Continental Lodges, which became the homes of the friends of James, and by these means they held communication with their friends in England.<sup>1</sup>

As the high degrees were not known and probably not actually prepared until more than a third of the 18th century had passed, and as James died long before in 1701, we must have doubts regarding these claims as to dates and persons. Students of Freemasonry in search of the truth must regret these sadly tangled tales in which the boldest and broadest claims are offered in the place of facts, the most absurd fables are presented as accounts of actual occurrences, the known order of events is coolly defied and even their nature warped, the happenings of the 18th century transferred to the 17th. The third degree is said to have been modified in its ritual during the Commonwealth but we are unable to find that any third degree was in existence until after 1717. We are told that high degrees were invented at the same time, although history records the fact that the first of them was not made until about the year 1728. Such writers, if they really believed what they claimed, must have adopted the curious say-

<sup>1</sup> "Historical Landmarks," II, p. 28.



ing of the early Latin author, Tertullian, who wrote, *Certum est quia impossibile est* — “It is certain because it is impossible.” Better would it be to remember the saying of Polybius, that if we take truth from history nothing will remain but an idle tale.

We must, then, reject as altogether unsound the theory that there was any connection between the Stuart family and Freemasonry during the life of James II. We can fairly do this for the simple reason that at that period there was no system of Speculative Freemasonry existing which could have been made over by the friends of that family into a political tool for its benefit. If there was any connection at all, it must be looked for as developed at a later period.

The views of Findel on this subject, as given in his *History of Freemasonry*, are worthy of attention. They are without that mystical element so plain and so hindering in all the statements which have already been mentioned. His language is as follows:

“Ever since the banishment of the Stuarts from England in 1688, secret alliances had been kept up between Rome and Scotland; for to the former place the Pretender James Stuart had retired in 1719 and his son Charles Edward was born there in 1720; and these communications became the more intimate the higher the hopes of the Pretender rose. The Jesuits played a very important part in these conferences. Regarding the reinstatement of the Stuarts and the extension of the power of the Roman Church as identical, they sought at that time to make the Society of Freemasons subservient to their ends. But to make use of the Fraternity, to restore the exiled family to the throne, could not have been contemplated, as Freemasonry could hardly be said to exist in Scotland then. Perhaps in 1724, when Ramsay was a year in Rome, or in 1728, when the Pretender in Parma kept up an intercourse with the restless Duke of Wharton, a Past Grand Master, this idea was first entertained, and then when it was apparent how difficult it would be to corrupt the loyalty and fealty of Freemasonry in the Grand Lodge of Scotland, founded in 1736, this scheme was set on foot, of assembling the faithful adherents of the banished royal family in the High Degrees! The soil that was best adapted for this innovation was France, where the low ebb to which Freemasonry had sunk had paved



the way for all kinds of new-fangled notions, and where the Lodges were composed of Scotch conspirators and accomplices of the Jesuits. When the path had thus been smoothed by the agency of these secret propagandists, Ramsay, at that time Grand Orator (an office unknown in England), by his speech completed the preliminaries necessary for the introduction of the High Degrees; their further development was left to the instrumentality of others, whose influence produced a result somewhat different from that originally intended."<sup>1</sup>

After the death of James II. his son, commonly called the Chevalier St. George, does not appear to have actively pushed his claims to the throne beyond the attempted invasion of England in 1715. He afterward retired to Rome, where the rest of his life was passed in the quiet observance of religious duties. Nor is there any satisfactory evidence that he was in any way connected with Freemasonry.

His sons, who had been born at Rome, were in the meantime subject to the teaching of the Chevalier Andrew Michael Ramsay, who was appointed their tutor. Ramsay was a man of learning and genius. Mackey adds that he was "a Scotchman, a Jacobite, and a Roman Catholic but he was also an ardent Freemason."

This assertion by Bro. Mackey is not accepted by all students. Dr. W. J. Chetwode Crawley points out that the known facts permit the belief that Ramsay was invited to give his famous oration not as an initiate but as a visitor of note to deliver an address before a Lodge of Freemasons, that he was only five months in the Stuart home at Rome and never again saw any member of the family — he later on returning to England by King George's express consent and being welcomed by the government, that he was converted by Fénélon to a faith Catholic but not Roman Catholic. Bro. Crawley further says "Andrew Lang, perhaps the highest authority on the Jacobite intrigues of the Georgian period, personally assured the present writer that there was in his opinion no ground whatever for suspecting Ramsay of being a political agent."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Geschichte der Freimaurerei." — Translation of Lyon, p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> See pages 61-63, *The Templar Legends in Freemasonry*, "Ars Quatuor Coronatorum," vol. xxvi, part 1, 1913.



The point is perhaps of little importance but we may point out that Bro. Crawley finds that Ramsay was ten months in Rome, five being in the Stuart household. Bro. Hawkins in the *Concise Cyclopaedia* says Ramsay held the post of tutor for fifteen months, and Findel as we have seen mentions a year for the time Ramsay was in Rome.

If Ramsay was a Jacobite he was prepared to bend his powers to accomplish the restoration of the Stuarts to what he believed to be their lawful rights. If he was also a Freemason he might have seen in that institution a means, if properly directed, of effecting that purpose. If intimately acquainted with the old legends of Freemasonry, he might have resolved so to modify them as to transfer their Biblical to political allusions. With this design he could begin the making of a series of High Degrees, under whose symbolism to conceal a wholly political object.

These High Degrees have had a Scottish character. This may be credited partly to a desire to effect a political influence among the Freemasons of Scotland, in which country the first attempts for the restoration of the Stuarts were to be made. We have to this day in Freemasonry such terms as "Ecossaism," "Scottish Knights of St. Andrew," "Scottish Master," "Scottish Architect," and the "Scottish Rite." The use of these words is calculated to produce upon readers not thoroughly versed in Masonic history the impression that the High Degrees of Freemasonry originated in Scotland — an impression which it may have been the object of the Jacobites to make.

There is another word for which the language of Freemasonry has been indebted to this cause. This is *Heredom*, indifferently spelled in the old rituals, *Herodem*, *Heroden* and *Heredon*. Now the source of this word is not plain and various attempts have been made to give it some sensible meaning.

One writer, in the London *Freemasons' Magazine*, thinks that the word is taken from the Greek *hieros* — "holy," and *domos* — "house," and that it means "the *holy house*," that is, the Temple. This explanation is ingenious, and it has been adopted by some recent authorities.

Ragon,<sup>1</sup> however, offers a different explanation. He thinks that it is a form of the Latin *hæredum*, meaning a "heritage,"

<sup>1</sup> "Orthodoxie Maçonnique," p. 91.



and that it refers to the Château of St. Germain, the home for a long time of the exiled Stuarts and the only legacy left to them. If we accept this view, we should rather be inclined to think that the heritage referred to the throne of Great Britain which they claimed as their lawful possession, and of which, in the opinion of their friends, they had been robbed.

This explanation is equally as ingenious and just as likely as the former one. If adopted, it will add another link to the chain of evidence which tends to prove that the High Degrees were originally made by Jacobites to advance the cause of the Stuarts.

Whatever may be the source of the word the rituals leave us in no doubt as to what was its pretended meaning. In one of these rituals, that of the Grand Architect, we meet with the following questions and answers:

"Q. Where was your first Lodge held?

"A. Between three mountains, inaccessible to the profane, where cock never crew, lion roared, nor woman chattered; in a profound valley.

"Q. What are these three mountains named?

"A. Mount Moriah, in the bosom of the land of Gabaon, Mount Sinai, and the Mountain of Heredon.

"Q. What is this Mountain of Heredon?

"A. A mountain situated between the West and the North of Scotland, at the end of the sun's course, where the first Lodge of Masonry was held; in that terrestrial part which has given name to Scottish Masonry.

"Q. What do you mean by a profound valley?

"A. I mean the tranquillity of our Lodges."

From this catechism we learn that in inventing the word *Heredon* to mean a fabled mountain, situated in some unknown part of Scotland, the author intended to select that kingdom as the birthplace of those Masonic degrees by whose help he expected to raise a powerful support in the success of the designs of the Jacobite party. The selection of this country was a tribute to his own national preferences and to those of his countrymen.

By the "profound valley," which denoted "the tranquillity of the Lodges," the ritualist probably meant to teach the doctrine that in the hiding places of these Masonic reunions, where



none were to be permitted to enter except "the well-tried, true, and trusty," the plans of the Jacobites to overthrow the government and to effect the restoration of the Stuarts could be best conducted. Fortunately for the purity of the non-political character of the Masonic institution, this doctrine was not generally accepted by the Freemasons of Scotland.

There is something else concerning this word *Heredon*, in its connection with Stuart Freemasonry, that is worth attention.

One Order of Freemasonry, popular in Scotland and in the United States, is called the Royal Order of Scotland, and has two degrees, entitled "Heredon of Kilwinning," and "Rosy Cross." The first is said, in the traditions of the Order, to have originated in the reign of David I., in the 12th century, and the second to have been instituted by Robert Bruce, who revived the former and put the two into one Order, of which the King of Scotland was forever to be the head. This tradition is, however, attacked by Bro. Lyon, in his *History of the Lodge of Edinburgh*. He denies that the Lodge at Kilwinning ever at any period practiced or acknowledged other than the Craft degrees, or that there exists any tradition, local or national, worthy of the name, or any trustworthy document yet discovered that can in the least degree be held to identify Robert Bruce with the holding of Masonic courts or the institution of a secret society at Kilwinning.

"The paternity of the Royal Order," he says, "is now pretty generally attributed to a Jacobite Knight named Andrew Ramsay, a devoted follower of the Pretender, and famous as the fabricator of certain rites, inaugurated in France about 1735-40, and through the propagation of which it was hoped the fallen fortunes of the Stuarts would be retrieved."<sup>1</sup>

On September 24, 1745, soon after the commencement of his invasion of Britain, Charles Edward, the son of the Old Pretender, or Chevalier St. George, styled by his followers James III., is said to have been admitted into the Order of Knights Templar, and to have been elected its Grand Master, a position which he held until his death. Such is the tradition. Here again we are met by the statements of Bro. Lyon that Templarism was not brought into Scotland until the year 1798.<sup>2</sup> If that claim be true it is

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 307.

<sup>2</sup> See above "History," p. 287.



impossible that Charles Edward could have been made a Templar at Edinburgh in 1745.

Of course the Jacobites may have accorded him official control over any high degrees prepared in the interest of his family. Indeed it is not unlikely, as has been affirmed, that, resting his claim on the ritual provision that the Kings of Scotland were by reason of that position the Grand Masters of the Royal Order, he had taken that title.

In the year 1747, more than twelve months after his return from his unlucky invasion of Scotland and England, Charles Edward is said to have issued a charter for the formation at the town of Arras in France of what is called in the document "a Sovereign Primordial Chapter of Rose Croix under the distinctive title of Scottish Jacobite."

The Count de Hamel, Prefect of the Department in which Arras is situated, discovered in 1853 a copy of the charter in the departmental archives.

The Young Pretender, or some one professing to act for him, gives his Masonic titles in this document as follows:

"We, Charles Edward, King of England, France, Scotland, and Ireland, and as such Substitute Grand Master of the Chapter of H., known by the title of Knight of the Eagle and Pelican, and since our sorrows and misfortunes by that of Rose Croix," etc.

The initial letter "H." undoubtedly means the Scottish Chapter of Heredon. Of this body, by its ritual regulation, his father as King of Scotland, would have been the Grand Master, and the son, therefore, only takes the less exalted title of Substitute.

Why the title of King in the charter is given to the Young Pretender is worth study. The father did not die until 1766 and surely the son would not claim to be king nineteen years before that date. A clumsy forger might make such blunders, the precise officials of a royal court were unlikely to do so.

We are unable to see that this charter settles the question that it was of the Royal Order of Scotland and not of the Knights Templar that Charles Edward was made Grand Master, or himself assumed the Grand Mastership, during his visit in 1745 to Edinburgh. But that Order and the other High Degrees might have been made by Jacobites to promote the interests of his cause.



Then his acceptance or his taking of the rank and functions of a presiding officer was a recognition of the plan to use Freemasonry as a political instrument, and is, in fact, the first and basic point in the history of the claims made for Stuart Freemasonry. We here for the first time get some showing that there was an attempt to connect the institution of Freemasonry with the fortunes and political efforts of the Stuarts.

But there is an old proverb that "Where there is smoke, there is fire." While the charter may be irregular in form, the object may be direct enough. The title given to this charter at Arras is evidence that its design was really political. The words *Ecosse Jacobite*, or Scottish Jacobite, were at that period universally accepted as a party name to designate a very loyal friend of the Stuart claims to the throne of England.

The charter also shows that the organization of this chapter was intended only as the beginning of a plan to enlist other Freemasons in the same political design. The members of the chapter were authorized "not only to make knights, but even to create a chapter in whatever town they might think proper." This they are on record as doing in a few instances, among them one at Paris in 1780, which in 1801 was united to the Grand Orient of France.

A year after the starting of the Chapter at Arras, the Rite of the *Veille Bru*, or the *Faithful Scottish Freemasons*, was created at Toulouse in grateful memory of the reception given by the Freemasons of that place to Sir Samuel Lockhart, the military assistant of the Pretender. Ragon says that the favorites who came with this prince to France were in the habit of selling to certain speculators charters for mother Lodges, patents for Chapters, etc. These titles were their property and they did not fail to use them as the means of earning a living.

A long accepted assertion in Masonic history was that the first Lodge established in France by a warrant from the Grand Lodge of England was set at work in the year 1725. There is no doubt that a Lodge of Freemasons met in that year at the house of one Hure, and that it was presided over by the Earl of Derwentwater. But the studies of Bro. Hughan have proved that this was what we would now call a clandestine or irregular body, and that the first French Lodge legally established by the Grand



Lodge of England was in 1732. Outside the fact that there is no record in that Grand Lodge of England of any Lodge in France at the early date of 1725, it is most unlikely that a warrant would have been granted to so obvious a Jacobite as Derwentwater. Political reasons of the greatest weight at that time would have forbidden any such action.

Charles Radcliffe with his brother the Earl of Derwentwater had been arrested in England for the part taken by them in the uprising of 1715 to place James III. on the throne. They were both sentenced to death and the earl was executed, but Radcliffe made his escape to France where he assumed the title which, as he claimed, had come to him by the death of his brother's son. In the later rebellion of 1745, having tried to join the Young Pretender, the vessel in which he sailed was captured by an English warship, and being carried to London, he was beheaded in December, 1746.

The Earl of Derwentwater was therefore a devoted Jacobite, a condemned rebel who had been sentenced to death for his treason, a fugitive from the law, and a pensioner of the Old Pretender or Chevalier St. George, who, by the order of Louis XIV., had been proclaimed King of England under the title of James III.

We shall find it difficult to believe that the Grand Lodge of England would have granted to him and to his Jacobite associates a warrant for the establishment of a Lodge. Its statutes had declared in very plain words that a rebel against the State was not to be supported in his uprising. But no greater approval could have been given than to make him the Master of a new Lodge.

Such, however, was long universally accepted as a part of the reliable history of Freemasonry in France. In the words of a modern writer, "The story was too ridiculous to be believed, and so everybody believed it."

Nevertheless we may accept as a fact that in 1725 an English Lodge was really opened and held in the house of an English confectioner named Hure. Without regular authority, it was perhaps organized, although we have no records to that effect, through the advice and instructions of Ramsay — and was a Jacobite Lodge consisting solely of the friends of the Old Pretender.



Probably this is the most evident instance that we have of the connection of the Stuarts with Freemasonry. It was an effort made by the followers of that house to enlist the Order as a means of restoring its fallen fortunes. The principal members of the Lodge were Derwentwater, Maskelyne, and Heguerty or Heguety. Of Derwentwater we have already spoken; the second was evidently a Scotchman, but the name of the third has been so entangled by its French form that we are unable to trace it to its source. It has been supposed that the real name was Haggerty; if so, he was probably an Irishman. But they were all Jacobites.

The Rite of Strict Observance, which at one time in the 18th century took so strong a hold upon the Freemasons of Germany, and whose main doctrine was that of Ramsay — that Freemasonry was only an outcome of the Templar system — is said to have been originally erected in the interests of the Stuarts, and the Brotherhood was expected to give freely to the efforts in favor of the Pretender.

After a review of all that has been written on this very complex subject — the theories oftentimes altogether foggy, misty assumptions in place of facts, guesses often very wild and frequently wide of the mark, and the grains of history in this vast amount of traditional and mythical trash so small — we may be safe in offering a few conclusions.

We daresay that at one time the political efforts of the friends of the dethroned and exiled family of the Stuarts did exercise a very considerable effect on the outward form and the internal spirit of Freemasonry, as it existed on the continent of Europe.

The symbolic degrees of ancient Craft Freemasonry felt the influence but slightly. It extended only to a political view of the Legend of the Master's degree. Here the beheading of Charles I., and forced giving up of the kingdom and the exile of James II., was sometimes put in the place of the fate of Hiram, and to a change in the substitute word so as to apply the phrase "the Widow's son" to the child of Henrietta Maria, formerly the wife of Charles I. The effect of these changes, except that of the *word*, which still continues in some Rites, has long since worn away, but their memory still remains as a relic of the incidents of Stuart Freemasonry.



Perhaps the principal influence of this policy was shown in the making of what are called the "High Degrees," the "Hautes Grades" of the French. Until the year 1728 these additions to the body of Freemasonry were unknown. The Chevalier Ramsay, the tutor of the Pretender in his childhood, and by many supposed very naturally to be his earnest friend and warm supporter, is often credited to be a pioneer in shaping these degrees, although other inventors were not slow in following up the work.

If these degrees were at first created solely to institute a form of Freemasonry which should be worked for the purpose of restoring the Pretender to the throne of his ancestors, most of them became useless as their need ceased, and their names alone are preserved in the catalogues of collectors. But their effect is to this day seen in such of them as still remain and are practiced in existing Rites, which have been derived indirectly from the system invented in the Chapter of Clermont or the Château of St. Germain. The particular design has passed away but the general features still remain, by which we are able to recognize what so many have believed to be the remains of Stuart Freemasonry.

We must reject the notion that James II. had any connection with it. However unfitted he may have been by his peculiar makeup from entering into any such bold plans, the question is set at rest by the simple fact that up to the time of his death there was no widespread Masonic organization upon which he or his friends could have acted to advantage.

His son, the Chevalier St. George, was almost in the same position. He is described in history as a prince — pious, pacific and without talents, incapable of being made the leading actor in such a drama. Besides, Speculative Freemasonry had not assumed the proportions necessary to make it available as a part of a conspiracy until long after he had retired from active life to the practice of religious and hermit habits in Rome.

But his son Charles Edward, the Young Pretender as he was called, was of a lively type; an active genius, having a fair amount of talent, and a spirit of enterprise which well fitted him to accept the place given him by Jacobite makers of rituals. Freemasonry had then begun to excite public attention, and was already an institution that was rapidly gaining ground.



They probably saw in it what was deemed a fitting lever to be used in the raising of the royal exile to the throne, and Prince Charles Edward would not have been human did he not welcome these attempts and do his utmost to make use of them.

Thus we must credit the invention of Stuart Freemasonry, the foundations of which began to be laid down early in the 18th century, perhaps with the quiet approval of the Old Pretender. Finally the workings of the system were fully developed when the Young Pretender began his unsuccessful career in search of a throne, which once lost was never to be recovered.

This attempt to connect Freemasonry with the fortunes of the Stuarts was the first effort to introduce politics into the institution. To the credit of its character as a school of speculative philosophy, the project proved a signal failure.

The subject can not be left here without asserting that Prince Charles Edward's relations to Freemasonry, or indeed those of Ramsay himself, are not any too well established. That the friends of both were masonically active is a fair assumption.<sup>1</sup> Bro. Gould also points out an excuse for our inability to connect the Prince actively with the Craft.<sup>2</sup> He says, "It is affirmed (and with perhaps the greater share of reason) that the Prince was compelled by the altered circumstances of his cause, to repudiate any relations with Freemasonry."

<sup>1</sup> See the "Jacobite Lodge at Rome," 1735-7, by W. J. Hughan, to show the association of Prince Charles Edward's friends in Masonic circles and the slight traces of his own connection if any.

<sup>2</sup> See the "Concise History of Freemasonry," 1803, p. 324.



## CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

### THE JESUITS IN FREEMASONRY



AN opinion has been held by several writers of standing that the Society of Jesus, more briefly styled the Jesuits, sought, about the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century, to mix with the Freemasons and to direct the aims of that institution to the ambitious designs of their own Order. This view has been denied by other writers of equal rank, though it is admitted that Roman Catholic, if not Jesuitical, features are to be found in some of the high degrees.

Mackey says that one German writer claims that the object of the Jesuits in seeking to get a grip upon the Masonic institution was that they might be thus assisted in their design of establishing an aristocracy within themselves, and that they planned to gain this object by securing not only the direction of the Masonic Lodges, but also by getting a control of the schools and churches, and all the pursuits of science, and even of business.

But the more generally accepted reason for this attempt to interfere with the Lodges is that the Jesuits thus sought by their influence and secret working to aid the Stuarts to regain the throne, and then, as an expected result, to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion in England.

While there is a great lack of historical testimony to prove that the Jesuits ever mingled with Freemasonry — a question to be hereafter decided — there is no doubt of the selfish and ambitious designs of the disciples of Loyola<sup>1</sup> to secure a control of the public and private affairs of every government where they could obtain a foothold. A knowledge of these designs led to the dis-

<sup>1</sup> Ignatius de Loyola, born 1491, died 1556, the thirteenth son of a Spanish noble. Founder of the Society of Jesus and author of its "Constitutions," he was General of the organization until his death.



like of the Order among even Roman Catholic powers and caused its total suppression, in 1773, by Pope Clement XIV.,<sup>1</sup> from which it was not relieved until 1814, when their privileges were renewed by Pope Pius VII.

Gadicke arrived at the conclusion that it is proved by history to be a falsehood that Freemasonry was ever concealed under the mask of Jesuitism, or that it derived its existence from that source.<sup>2</sup> It is, however, but fair that we should collect and compare the arguments from both sides.

Robison, who, where Freemasonry was concerned, could find a ghost in every bush, is, of course, of very little authority as to facts. But he may supply us with a record of the opinions which existed at the time of his writing. He says that when James II. fled from England to France, which was in 1688, his followers took Freemasonry with them to the Continent, where it was received and used by the French in a manner suited to the tastes and habits of that people. He adds that "At this time, also, the Jesuits took a more active hand in Freemasonry than ever. They insinuated themselves into the English Lodges, where they were caressed by the Catholics, who panted after the re-establishment of their faith, and tolerated by the Protestant royalists, who thought no concession too great a compensation for their services. At this time changes were made in some of the Masonic symbols, particularly in the tracing of the Lodge, which bear evident marks of Jesuitical interference."<sup>3</sup>

Speaking of the High Degrees, the making or invention of which, however, he dates very early, he says that "in all this progressive mummery we see much of the hand of the Jesuits, and it would seem that it was encouraged by the church."<sup>4</sup> But he thinks that the Freemasons, protected by their secrecy, ventured further than the clergy approved in their philosophical explanations of the symbols, opposing at last some of "the ridiculous and oppressive superstitions of the church."<sup>5</sup> Thus he

<sup>1</sup> Elected 1769, died 1774, he seems in his crushing of the Jesuits to have been convinced that the peace of the church would thereby be benefited.

<sup>2</sup> "Freimaurer Lexicon," article, "*Jesuiten*." The author, Johann Christian Gadicke, born at Berlin, Germany, 1763, was initiated 1792, in the Lodge Joseph zur Einigkeit, and joined in 1804 the Lodge Drei Seraphinen.

<sup>3</sup> "Proofs of a Conspiracy," p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> See above work, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> See above work.



accounts for the persecution of Freemasonry at a later period by the priests, and their attempts at that time to crush the Lodges.

The story, as thus told by Robison, is about the same as that which has been accepted by all writers who trace the origin of Freemasonry to the Jesuits. They claim, as we have seen, that it was instituted about the time when James II. was expelled from England. If it was not then invented as a secret society, they hold that it was at least modified in all its features from that form which it originally had in England, and was adapted as a political engine to aid in restoring the exiled monarch and to firmly establish in his recovered kingdom the Roman Catholic religion.

Such theorists have evidently mixed up primitive Speculative Freemasonry, consisting only of three degrees, with the further grades invented later and usually credited to Ramsay and the ritualists who followed him. But suppose we relieve the theory of this confusion and look at it as affirming that the Jesuits at the College of Clermont modified the Third Degree and invented others, such as the Scottish Knight of St. Andrew, for the purpose of restoring James II. to the throne. In that case we shall find no evidence in history to support this view. On the contrary, there are difficulties in the way which it will be impossible to overcome.

James II. left the throne in 1688. After a useless attempt to recover it by an unsuccessful invasion of Ireland, he took up his residence at the Château of St. Germain-en-Laye, in France, where he died in 1701.

No one has been able, between the two periods of 1688, when James gave up the throne, and 1701, when he died, to find either in England or elsewhere any Third Degree such as is in use by the regular Lodges of today. Most Masonic students accept our present system as being given practically its present form between 1717 and 1738. A change could not have been made in the latter part of the 17th century of that which did not exist until the beginning of the 18th. If there was no Speculative Freemasonry during the lifetime of James, distinctly different from the Operative Art practiced by the guilds in the Middle Ages, it is equally absurd to contend that added degrees or grades were invented to illustrate and complete a building whose foundations had not yet been laid.



We may safely conclude that the theory that the Jesuits in the 17th century invented Freemasonry for the purpose of effecting one of their ambitious projects, or that they took it as it then existed, changed it, and added to it for the same purpose, is absolutely unsound.

Another theory of the same type has been advanced. This accounts for the founding of what has been called "Jesuitic Freemasonry" at about the middle of the 18th century. This theory is certainly free from the errors as to dates which we meet in the other one, although the proofs that there ever was such a Freemasonry are still very unsatisfactory.

This notion of the intrusion, as it may well be called, the uninvited or forced entrance of the Jesuits into the Masonic Order, has been credited to the Illuminati, that secret society which was founded by Adam Weishaupt<sup>1</sup> in Bavaria on May 1, 1776. The original object of this society was, as its founder declared, to enable its members to attain the greatest possible amount of virtue, and by the association of good men to oppose the progress of moral evil.

The Order of the Illuminati gained importance by being mentioned with Freemasonry, whose symbolic degrees may have formed the basis of its esoteric instructions. The associates of Weishaupt were certainly friendly to Freemasonry. This has led it incorrectly to be deemed a Masonic Rite. It could really lay no claim to that character, though Mackey points out it required a previous initiation into the symbolic degrees to entitle its disciples to advance further.

Mackey is firmly of opinion that the charges made against it, that it was a political organization, and that one of its designs was to undermine the Christian religion, although strongly upheld by Barruel, Robison, and a host of other foes of Freemasonry, have no foundation in truth. The principles of the Order were liberal and philosophical.

But Bro. A. F. A. Woodford, *Cyclopedia of Freemasonry*, calls it a mischievous association and dangerously political. "Weishaupt was originally a Roman Catholic and probably a

<sup>1</sup> Adam Weishaupt, born 1748, died 1830, was initiated in the Lodge Theodor zum guten Rath at Munich in 1777. Thus he was not a Freemason at the time when the Order of the Illuminati was organized.



Jesuit, and that he is not the first Jesuit by many who has preached revolutionary socialism and the overthrow of kingly power, under the specious names of liberty, civilization, and universal fraternity."

Bro. George Washington, writing of the doctrines of the Illuminati and the principles of Jacobinism, also says, "The idea I meant to convey, was, that I did not believe that the Lodge of Free Masons in this Country had, as Societies, endeavored to propagate the diabolical tenets of the first, or the pernicious principles of the latter (if they are susceptible of separation)."<sup>1</sup>

Advocating free thought, the Illuminati came of course into conflict with the Roman Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus, whose efforts were altogether the other way. The priests therefore became its most active enemies, and their opposition was so successful that it was forbidden in 1784 by the Elector of Bavaria who arrested many members, imprisoned the leaders (Weishaupt escaping to Coburg-Gotha), and seized its property.

A growing rivalry is reported to have existed between Illuminism and the many Masonic Rites, which about the period of its popularity were constantly arising in Germany and in France. With the natural egotism of reformers, the Illuminati sought to prove the superiority of their own system to that of their rivals.

We are told they claimed that all the Lodges of Freemasons were secretly controlled by the Jesuits; that their laws and their mysteries were the inventions of the same Order, of whom every Freemason was blindly the slave and the tool. Hence they concluded that he who desired to possess the genuine mysteries of Freemasonry must seek them not among the degrees of Rose Croix or the Scottish Knights, or still less among the English Freemasons and the disciples of the Rite of Strict Observance in Germany, but only in the Eclectic Lodges that had been set at work by the Illuminati.

Such, says Barruel, was the doctrine of the Illuminati, advanced for the purpose of elevating the character and aims of their own institution. The French abbé is not generally trustworthy on any subject connected with Freemasonry, of which he was the avowed and firm foe, but we must acknowledge that he

<sup>1</sup> "Masonic Correspondence of Washington," Julius F. Sachse, 1915, p. 131.



was not far from wrong in calling this story of Jesuitic Freemasonry a "ridiculous and contemptible fable."

We are disposed to agree with him, when he says, "If prejudice did not sometimes destroy the faculty of reasoning, we should be astonished that the Freemasons could permit themselves to be ensnared in so clumsy a trap. What is it, in fact, but to say to the Mother Lodge of Edinburgh, to the Grand Lodges of London and York, to their rulers, and to all their Grand Masters: 'You thought that you held the reins of the Masonic world, and you looked upon yourselves as the great depository of its secrets, the distributors of its diplomas; but you are not so, and, without even knowing it, are merely puppets of which the Jesuits hold the leading strings, and which they move at their pleasure.'" <sup>1</sup>

With but a little trouble we may be able to solve this apparently difficult problem of the Jesuitical relations with Freemasonry.

The Jesuits appear to have taken the priests of Egypt for their pattern. Like them, they sought to be the preservers and the explainers of religion. The vows which they took attached them to their Order with bonds as secure as those that united the Egyptian priests in the sacred college of Memphis. Those who sought admission into their ranks were compelled to pass through trials of their courage and faith. Their ambition was as lasting as their cunning was keen. They strove to be the confessors and the counsellors of kings, and to control the education of youth, that by these means they might become of importance in the state, and direct the policy of every government where they were admitted. This policy was on all occasions to be made to serve the interests of the church.

With not less than a hundred schools or colleges in France, the most important was that of Clermont, which, though at one time closed, had received renewed letters patent from Louis XIV.

This College of Clermont, where James II. was a frequent guest, led there by his religious feelings, is said to have been the seat of that plan of the Stuart faction to secure either in the invention or the adoption of Freemasonry a means of restoring the monarch to his throne, and of reviving the Roman Catholic religion in Protestant England.

<sup>1</sup> "Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire du Jacobinisme," T. N., p. 291.



We may readily admit that the Jesuits were very anxious to accomplish both these objects, and that for that purpose they would enter into any plot which would probably lead to success. With this purpose there can be but little doubt that they united with the friends of the Stuarts.

But this conspiracy could not have had any reference to a Masonic organization, because Freemasonry as we now know it was during the life of James II. wholly unknown in France, and known in England only as a Gild of Operative Freemasons, into which a few non-masons had been admitted through courtesy. It certainly had not yet assumed the form in which we are called upon to view it as the political engine used by the Jesuits. The Grand Lodge of England, the mother of all modern Speculative Freemasonry, had no existence until 1717, or sixteen years after the death of the king.

We are bound, therefore, if on the ground of these dates alone, to reject any theory that connects the Jesuits with Freemasonry during the life of James II. Nevertheless, we may be ready to admit their political plots in the interests of that dethroned king. During the life of his son and as far as that goes his ranking successor, the so-called James III., Speculative Freemasonry was organized in its modern form in England and passed over into France.

The Lodge established in Paris in 1725 was probably built up of friends of the Stuart family, as has already been shown. Probably most of the members were Roman Catholics and under the influence of the Jesuits. But it is not likely that those priests took an active part in the inner organization of the Lodge. They could do their work better outside of it than within.

Mackey finds in the Rose Croix and some other of the High Degrees the influences of a Roman Catholic spirit in the original rituals. This might naturally arise from the religious tendencies of their founders, and did not require the special aid of Jesuitism.

The bull of excommunication of Pope Clement XII. in 1738 must have cut off the Jesuits from all connection with Freemasonry except as its foes and slanderers, parts which up to the present day they have played without a halt.

We must refuse to accept the theory which asserts that there once existed for the Jacobite cause a friendly union between Free-



masonry and Jesuitism. That is one of those mythical stories which, born in the imagination of its inventors, has been fostered only by the easy belief of those accepting the claim. Now not more than a fable, not even cleverly contrived, there was a time when it was received as a part of the trustworthy history of Freemasonry.

A few words may be said of the history of the Jesuits. A royal decree expelled them from Portugal in 1759, Spain finally banished them in 1869, France in 1880, Russia in 1820, Germany in 1883, Switzerland in 1848, while England which once forced them out by penalties severe unto death relaxed these laws later and the Order has a foothold in that country, Belgium, Ireland, Italy, the United States, etc. For some account of the reasons for the lack of favor shown the Jesuits by those so well able to judge them the reader may consult to advantage the witty *Provincial Letters* by Blaise Pascal.



## CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

### OLIVER CROMWELL AND FREEMASONRY



THREE fables have been used to show a connection between Freemasonry and the royal objects of the Stuarts. One made it the purpose of the followers of James II. to use the institution as a means of restoring that king to the throne. A second claimed the Jesuits were to employ it for the same purpose, as well as for the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in England. The third and most unlikely of these fables is that which credits the invention of Freemasonry as a secret society to Oliver Cromwell who is supposed to have employed it as a political means to aid him in taking the throne from Charles I., in the setting aside of the line of royal heirs to the kingdom, and the founding of a republic on its ruins, with himself for its head. The first and second of these fables have already been discussed. The consideration of the third will be the subject of the present chapter.

The theory that Freemasonry was instituted by Oliver Cromwell was not at first received like the other two by any large portion of the Fraternity. It was the invention of a single mind and was first made public in the year 1746, by the Abbé Larudan, who presented his views in a work entitled *Les Franc-Maçons Écrassés* — a book which Kloss, a bibliographer, says is the armory from which all the enemies of Freemasonry have since derived their weapons of abuse.

The claims of Larudan are noted for their absolute neglect of all historical authority and for the bold guesses which are presented to the reader in the place of facts.

His strongest argument for the truth of his theory is that the purposes of the Masonic institution and of the political course of Cromwell are the same, namely, to sustain the doctrines of liberty and equality among mankind.



Rejecting all the claims to great age that have been urged in behalf of the institution, Larudan thinks that it was in England where the Order of Freemasonry first saw the light of day, and that to Cromwell it owes its origin. This theory he claims (with what truth we know not) to have received from a certain Grand Master with whose wisdom and sincerity he was well acquainted. But even this authority, he says, would not have been sufficient to secure his belief, had it not afterward been confirmed by his reading of the history of the English Protector and his studies of the morals and the laws of the Order where he detected at every step the contact of Cromwell.

The object of Cromwell, as it has been already said, was the organization of a secret society whose members would be bound by the most solemn ties of fraternity. This body of men was to unite the various religions and political sects which prevailed in England in the reign of Charles I. to the prosecution of his views. These were equally opposed to the supreme control by a king and to the power of the Parliament. Cromwell therefore planned by means of a secret society to destroy both and raise himself to the head of affairs.

In the working out of this plan Cromwell went ahead with his usual care and skill. He first submitted the outline to several of his most intimate friends, such as Algernon Sidney, Harrington, Monk, and Fairfax, and he held with them several private meetings. But it was not until the year 1648 that he began to take the necessary steps for bringing matters to a head.

That year, at a dinner which he gave to a large number of his friends, he unfolded his designs to the company. When his guests, among whom were many members of Parliament, both Presbyterians and Independents, the two rival religious parties of the day, had been well fed, the host carefully led the conversation to the subject of the unhappy condition of England. He told with deep regret how the unfortunate nation had suffered sad conflicts of politics and religion, and he declared that it was a disgrace that men so intelligent as those who then heard him did not make an effort to put an end to these distracting contests of party.

Scarcely had Cromwell ceased to speak when Ireton, his son-in-law, who had been prepared for the occasion, arose, and, seconding the sentiments of his leader, proceeded to show the



absolute need for the public good of an agreement and union of the many contending parties which were then dividing the country. He claimed with fervor that he would not, himself, hesitate to give his fortune and his life to remedy such troubles, and to show to the people the road they ought to take, to relieve themselves from the load which was crushing them and to break the iron rod under which they were groaning. But to do this it was first necessary, he insisted, to destroy every power and influence which had betrayed the nation. Then, turning to Cromwell, he begged him to explain his views on this important matter, and to suggest the cure for these evils.

Cromwell did not hesitate to accept the task which had, it would seem without his previous agreement, been given to him. Addressing his guests in that mysterious style which he was accustomed to use, and the object of which was to confuse their minds and make them more ready to receive his boldest plans, he explained the obligation of a worship of God, the necessity to repel force by force, and to deliver mankind from misrule and slavery. He then concluded his speech, exciting the curiosity of his hearers by telling them that he knew a method by which they could succeed in this great enterprise, restore peace to England, and rescue it from the depth of misery into which it was plunged. This method, he added, if made known to the world, would win the favor of mankind and secure a glorious memory for its authors in the pages of history.

The address was well managed and well received. All of his guests earnestly asked him to make this wonderful plan known to them. But Cromwell would not give way at once to their pleas, but modestly replying that so important an enterprise was beyond the strength of any one man to accomplish and he would rather go on suffering the evils of a bad government than, in seeking to remove them by the efforts of his friends, to subject them to dangers which they might be unwilling to endure.

Cromwell well understood the type and temper of every man who sat at the table with him. He knew that by this artful address he would still further excite their curiosity and awaken their hopes.

So it was that, after many repeated pleadings, he finally agreed to explain his scheme, on the condition that all the guests



should take a solemn oath to reveal the plan to no one and to consider it after it had been proposed with absolutely an open mind. This was agreed to by all present. The oath of secrecy was taken. Cromwell then threw himself on his knees and, extending his hands toward heaven, called on God and all the celestial powers to witness the innocence of his heart and the purity of his intentions. All this the Abbé Larudan relates with a fullness of detail which we could expect only from an eye-witness of the event.

All this made a deep impression on his guests and prepared them for further demands upon their faith. Cromwell now announced that the precise moment for disclosing the plan had not arrived, and that an inspiration from heaven, which he had just received, warned him not to make it known until four days had elapsed.

His guests though impatient to receive a knowledge of the important secret, were compelled to hold in check their desires and to agree to meet again at the appointed time and at a place which was named.

On the day set for the purpose, all the guests went to a house in King Street, where the meeting took place, and Cromwell proceeded to develop his plan. (And here the Abbé Larudan becomes very free and full in the many minute details with which he describes what must have been a scene born of a lively imagination.)

Cromwell began by taking the guests into a dark room. Here he prepared their minds for what was going to occur by a long prayer, in the course of which he gave them to understand that he was in touch with the spirits of the blessed. After this he told them that his design was to found a society whose only objects would be to render due worship to God and to restore to England the peace for which it so earnestly longed. But this project, he added, required every prudence and the greatest care to secure its success. Then taking an incense pot in his hands, he filled the room with the most subtle fumes, so as to produce a favorable attitude in the company to hear what he had further to say.

He told them that at the reception of a new associate it was necessary that he should pass through a certain ceremony, to which all of them, without exception, would have to submit.



He asked them whether they were willing to subject themselves to this ceremony. To this inquiry everyone gave his consent. Five assistants were then chosen by Cromwell to fill as many places and to perform special services. These assistants were a Master, two Wardens, a Secretary, and an Orator.

Having made these arrangements, the visitors were taken to another room, which had been prepared for the purpose, and where there was a picture representing the ruins of King Solomon's Temple. From this place they were conducted to another, and, being blindfolded, were at last given the secrets of initiation.

Cromwell delivered an address on religion and politics, the purport of which was to show to the warring sects of Presbyterians and Independents, members of both being present, the necessity, for the public good, of giving up all their useless disputes, of becoming united, and of changing the bitter hatred which then inspired them for a tender love and charity toward each other.

The eloquence of their artful leader had the desired effect. Both sects joined with the army in the establishment of a secret society founded on the professed principles of love of God and the support of liberty and equality among men, but whose real design was to advance the projects of Cromwell, by destroying the rule of the king and the founding of a commonwealth of which he should be the head.

Unfortunately for the completed building of this rather interesting fable, the Abbé has not given free rein to his vivid imagination by letting us have the full details of the form of initiation. He has, however, in various parts of his book alluded to so much of it as to enable us to learn that the instructions were of a symbolic character, and that the Temple of Solomon was the leading symbol.

This Temple had been built by divine command to be the holy home of religion and as a place peculiarly prepared and dedicated to the performance of its impressive ceremonies. After several years of greatness and glory, the Temple had been destroyed by a powerful army, and the people who had been there accustomed to worship were loaded with chains and carried in captivity to Babylon. Years of slavery passed and then a pagan prince, chosen as the instrument of Divine mercy, had permitted the captives



to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild the Temple in its first splendor.

In this allegory, says the Abbé, the Freemasons of Cromwell found the exact pattern of their society. The Temple in its first splendor is a reminder of the early state of man. The religion and the ceremonies which were there practiced are nothing else than an expression of that universal law engraved on every heart whose principles are found in the ideas of justice and charity to which all men are obliged. The destruction of this Temple, and the captivity and slavery of its worshippers, are symbols of the pride and ambition which have produced political misery among men. The un pitying hosts of Assyrians who destroyed the Temple and led the people into captivity are the kings, princes, and magistrates whose power has trodden down nations with countless evils. Lastly, the chosen people charged with the duty of rebuilding the Temple are the Freemasons, who are to restore men to their original dignity.

Cromwell divided the Order which he founded into three classes or degrees. The Third or Master's degree was of course not without its Hiramic legend, but the explanation of its symbolism was very different from that which is given at the present day.

The legend is thus explained by the Abbé: The disorder of the workmen and the confusion at the Temple were intended to make a deep impression upon the mind of the candidate and to show him that the loss of liberty and equality, represented by the death of Hiram, is the cause of all the evils which affect mankind. While men lived peacefully in the asylum of the Temple of Liberty they enjoyed constant happiness. But they have been surprised and attacked by tyrants who have reduced them to a state of slavery. This is symbolized by the destruction of the Temple, which it is the duty of the Master Masons to rebuild; that is to say, to restore that liberty and equality which had been lost.

Cromwell appointed missionaries or agents, says Larudan, who spread the Order, not only over all England, but even into Scotland and Ireland, where many Lodges were put to work.

Members of the Order or Society were first called Freemasons. Afterwards the name was repeatedly changed to suit the political



conditions of the times, and they were called Levelers, then Independents, afterward Fifth Monarchy Men, and finally resumed their original title which they have kept to the present day.

Such is the fable of the Cromwellian origin of Freemasonry. We owe it entirely to the inventive genius of the Abbé Larudan. Yet it is not wholly a story of the imagination, but is really founded on a curious and striking mixture of the facts of history.

Edmund Ludlow was an honorable man who took at first a leading part in the Civil War which ended in the beheading of Charles I., the passing away of kingly powers, and the establishment of the Commonwealth. He was throughout his whole life a true and constant republican, and was as much opposed to the political schemes of Cromwell for that leader's own advancement to power as he was to the improper use of government by the King. In the language of the editor of his *Memoirs*, "He was an enemy to all arbitrary government, though gilded over with the most specious pretenses; and not only disapproved the usurpation of Cromwell, but would have opposed him with as much vigor as he had done the King, if all occasions of that nature had not been cut off by the extraordinary jealousy or vigilance of the usurpers."<sup>1</sup>

Ludlow was born in 1617, died in 1693, joined the Life Guards at outbreak of Civil War, elected to English Parliament in 1645, signed the death warrant of the King, Charles I., in 1649, Lieutenant-General of Horse in Ireland in 1651, and on the dying of Ireton the chief command fell into his charge. But he would not submit to the will of the Protector, Cromwell.

Having unsuccessfully labored in fighting the influence of Cromwell with the army, Ludlow gave up public affairs and retired to his home in Essex where he remained in quiet until the restoration of Charles II. Then he fled to Switzerland, where he resided until his death.

During his exile, Ludlow occupied his leisure hours in the writing of his *Memoirs*, a work of great value as a faithful record of the troublous period in which he lived and of which he was himself an important factor. These *Memoirs* have given a full

<sup>1</sup> Ludlow's "Memoirs," Preface, p. iv.



account of the trickery by which Cromwell secured the help of the army and destroyed the influence of the Parliament.

The work was published at Vevey, in Switzerland, under the title of *Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow, Esq.; Lieutenant-General of the Tories in Ireland, One of the Council of State, and a Member of the Parliament which began on November 3, 1640*. There are two volumes, with a supplement containing copies of important papers. The edition from which we quote bears the date of 1698. Another edition was published in 1894. The Abbé Larudan appears to have been well acquainted with the *Memoirs*. He undoubtedly read them carefully, for he has made many extracts from them and has repeatedly referred to Ludlow as his authority.

Unfortunately for the Abbé's intelligence, or far more probably for his honesty, he has always applied what Ludlow said of the plots of Cromwell for the building up of a new political party as if it were meant to describe the forming of a Masonic secret society.

Neither Ludlow nor any other writer refers to the existence of Freemasonry as we now have it and as it is described by the Abbé Larudan in the time of the English Civil Wars. Even the Operative Freemasons were not at that period greatly encouraged, for, says Northouck, "No regard to science and elegance was to be expected from the sour minds of the puritanical masters of the nation between the fall of Charles I. and the restoration of his son."<sup>1</sup>

The Gild of Freemasons, the only form in which the Order was known until the 18th century, was during the Commonwealth discouraged and architecture was neglected. In the clash of war the arts of peace are silent. Cromwell was, it is true, engaged in many political schemes, but he had other and more effective means to gain his ends than those of Freemasonry, of whose existence at that time, except as a gild of workmen, we have no historical evidence, but there are many historical facts on the other hand to contradict its probability.

The theory, therefore, that Freemasonry owes its origin to Oliver Cromwell, who invented it as a means of forwarding his designs toward obtaining the supreme power of the state, is merely a fable. We find it to be the invention of a priestly foe of the

<sup>1</sup> Northouck's "Constitutions," p. 141.



institution, and devised by him plainly to give to it a political appearance. By this trick, like his successors Barruel and Robison, he sought to injure it.

Brothers Kloss and Woodford agree that the work of the Abbé Larudan is best described as a "lie." Thory<sup>1</sup> points out the Abbé is also misleading in trying to convey the impression that his book is a continuation of the one by Perau<sup>2</sup> but the latter work is of an altogether different tone and quality to the bitter gibes of Larudan.

<sup>1</sup> Claude Antoine Thory, born at Paris in 1759, died in 1827, a Masonic historical writer, member of the Lodge St. Alexandre d'Ecosse, a student and collector of great industry.

<sup>2</sup> Gabriel Louis Calabre Perau, born 1700, died at Paris, 1767, an Abbé and member of the Sorbonne, wrote in 1742 a so-called explanation of the Masonic secrets but did this in so kindly a manner, real or false as this may be, that we must not class his work with the venom of such as Larudan.



















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